

*Collecting*  
*American First Editions*

ITS PITFALLS AND ITS PLEASURES

*by*

RICHARD CURLE

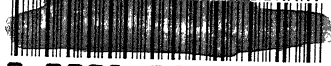
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*Richard Curle*



**COLLECTING  
AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS**





THE RAVEN  
AND  
OTHER POEMS.

BY  
EDGAR A. POE.

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NEW YORK:  
WILEY AND PUTNAM, 161 BROADWAY.  
1845.

*To Miss Elizabeth Barrett Barrett  
With the Respects of  
Edgar Poe*

Title-page of dedication copy of Poe's *The Raven and Other Poems*, with dedication inscription to Elizabeth Barrett.

*Collecting*  
*American First Editions*

ITS PITFALLS AND  
ITS PLEASURES

*By*  
RICHARD CURLE

*With fifty-one Illustrations*

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RICHARD CURLE

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To  
W. T. H. HOWE  
GOOD FRIEND AND WISE COLLECTOR



## PREFACE

THIS work is concerned primarily with first principles. Its aim is not to deal with every book of the authors mentioned, but to clear up moot points, to demolish false theories, to present new discoveries, and in general to suggest sound rules for the collecting of American first editions of the classic period. Tentative and imperfect though it be, I trust it will supply a real need, for the subject is full of obscurities and up to now comparatively little effort has been made to light it up from within. And yet it is only by so doing that the chaos can be dissolved and the collector enabled to steer a path through the maze. By describing methods of publication and by bringing ordinary logic to bear, I have at least tried to simplify the problem and to evolve some sort of synthesis.

I do not for a moment suppose that the validity of all my ideas will be admitted by every

## PREFACE

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one. That would be too much to expect. But I hope that my facts, which have been carefully checked by several experts, are correct, though as all knowledge is relative and as there is no such thing as finality in bibliography it would be foolish to be over-optimistic. I am well aware that the fable of Sisyphus is painfully applicable to the man who writes about American first editions. No sooner does he solve a difficulty, as he supposes, than along comes fresh evidence, down rolls the stone, and he has to start all over again. Yet it is only by experimenting that we advance, and only by arousing opposition that we bring about argument. And bibliographical discussions, unlike political ones, do occasionally end in agreement. It comes to this: that if somebody has always to be standing up to be kicked, I am willing, in a good cause, to be the next victim.

The real purpose of these pages is to encourage collecting. But that can best be achieved by giving the collector confidence. And therefore I have endeavored to warn him not alone against the many snares due to the natural intricacy of the books (which, of course, have led to many

## PREFACE

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mistakes about them that are commonly accepted as facts), but against those other snares spread for him by mankind. Needless to say, I do not refer to the honorable craft of book-repairing, to which almost every collector is under a debt. Certainly not. I refer to something quite different—the dishonorable craftiness of book-faking, done for the express purpose of deceiving both book-dealer and book-buyer. The rarer American first editions are being tampered with out of all conscience, and unless this be put a stop to they will fall into universal disrepute and people will turn their attention elsewhere. To everybody connected with books this is a matter of grave concern, and there can be only one opinion as to the desirability of stamping out suspicion by stamping out swindling. And the sure way to end swindling is: first, to be able to detect the swindles when you see them and, second, to decline to have anything to do with them when they are detected. In given instances, I admit, one cannot be positively certain, but by working along the lines I have laid down the swindler's position should gradually become more and more untenable.

## PREFACE

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My obligations are many. I owe gratitude to the great collectors of former days, like Mr. J. C. Chamberlain and Mr. S. H. Wake-man, whose sale catalogues, ably prepared by Mr. Arthur Swann and his associates, with the aid of their notes, are pioneer productions of their kind and still immensely valuable. To modern collectors, also, such as Mr. W. T. H. Howe, with whose wonderful American library I am well acquainted, and Mr. Carroll A. Wilson, whose unusual capacity for investigating problems and for marshalling evidence has been put freely at my service, I am exceedingly grateful. Without Mr. Wilson's constant help and advice I may say, indeed, that this book would have lost much of whatever value it has. His out-of-the-way learning and his ingenious reasoning have illumined many a doubtful point, while his indefatigable enthusiasm for detail and his vast knowledge of the period have suggested many a new one. And I must add that it is to the kindness of Mr. Howe and Mr. Wilson that I owe most of the illustrations. They allowed me to ransack their libraries. To the bibliographers, too, from Mr.

## PREFACE

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P. K. Foley and Mr. L. S. Livingston to Mr. A. F. Goldsmith and Mr. Merle Johnson, I am highly indebted, as also to Mr. R. W. G. Vail, formerly of the New York Public Library, who has given himself much trouble on my behalf.





# CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I . . . . .	1
<p>Increased interest in collecting American first editions—Inherent complexity of their bibliography—Some examples—Typographical defects—Importance and unimportance of inserted advertisements—Emerson's <i>The Conduct of Life</i>—Bibliographical knowledge obtained from contemporary advertisements—Portentous titles—"The long and the short of it."</p>	
CHAPTER II . . . . .	33
<p>Fabrications: labels, title-pages, regilding, added numerals, extracted matter—Lessons from the type; <i>Evangeline</i>—<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>—End-papers—Built-up copies—Repair of bindings—Boards and wrappers—Preliminary and terminal blank pages—Foxing—Necessary illustrations—Inserted "slips."</p>	
CHAPTER III . . . . .	69
<p>Contemporary names and dates—A "family copy" of Whittier's <i>Legends of New-England</i>—"Issues" and "editions"; need for precise rules; <i>Hiawatha</i> and <i>Miles Standish</i>—Accepted bibliographical points that do not exist—Three books of great bibliographical complexity (<i>Kavanagh</i>; <i>The Tent on the Beach</i>; <i>A Fable for Critics</i>)—Examples of misnumbered pages.</p>	
CHAPTER IV . . . . .	102
<p>Lack of logic in certain instances in preference for: single imprints, boards, wrappers, etc.—Mistakes of cataloguers (<i>The Masque of Pandora</i>, <i>Mogg Megone</i>)—Value of internal evidence—Alleged fourth edition of Whittier's <i>Voices of Freedom</i> explained—Puzzles of Cooper's <i>Lionel Lincoln</i> and <i>Deerslayer</i> and of some other books—Why certain works are common or rare—A sheer mistake—Misleading circumstantial evidence—Old letters as a guide—Some unsolved riddles of American bibliography.</p>	

## CONTENTS

---

	PAGE
CHAPTER V . . . . .	138
Reason for variety of bindings in American first editions—Some instances—So-called "presentation" bindings—Book-production in the Civil War—Importance of paper and binding in bibliography— <i>Two Years Before the Mast</i> —A too dogmatic statement—Wrappers, and the evidence from advertisements thereon—"Semi-anonymous" books—Magazine supplements—Problems of binding in Cooper— <i>The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table</i> — <i>Leaves of Grass</i> .	
CHAPTER VI . . . . .	168
Rare books still obtainable—Necessity for specialization—Hints to collectors of moderate means—Colors of bindings—Newspapers and magazines—Anonymous books and pamphlets—Sentiment in collecting—English first editions, real and otherwise—Second editions—Books of "association interest"—What authors to collect—"One-book" authors— <i>Tom Sawyer</i> and <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> —Reason for non-mention of certain rarities and common volumes—The true pleasure of collecting.	
INDEX . . . . .	215

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Title-page of dedication copy of Poe's <i>The Raven</i> , with the dedication inscription	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
Autograph letter by Mark Twain concerning <i>The Innocents Abroad</i> . . . . .	6
Title-page of Emerson's <i>Representative Men</i> , with presentation inscription . . . . .	Between 10 and 11
Correct (left) and incorrect (right) bindings of Emer- son's <i>Representative Men</i> . . . . .	Between 10 and 11
Earlier terminal advertising leaf in Thoreau's <i>The Maine Woods</i> . . . . .	Between 14 and 15
Later terminal advertising leaf in Thoreau's <i>The Maine Woods</i> . . . . .	Between 14 and 15
(Above) Advertisement from the back wrapper of "The Atlantic Monthly," December, 1858. (Below) Advertising slip pasted on page of text of "The Atlantic Monthly," December, 1860 . . . . .	24
Last page of <i>Letters from John Quincy Adams</i> edited by Whittier, with announcement of his forthcoming <i>Poems</i> (1837) . . . . .	28
Poe's statement of his share in <i>The Conchologist's First Book</i> . . . . .	30
First edition (left) and second edition (right) of Whit- man's <i>Leaves of Grass</i> . . . . .	Between 32 and 33
Title-page of Whitman's <i>Leaves of Grass</i>	Between 32 and 33
Longfellow explains the blending of fact and fiction in <i>Evangeline</i> . . . . .	42

## ILLUSTRATIONS

---

	FACING PAGE
Title-page of Hawthorne's <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> , with presentation inscription . . . . .	48
Seven bindings in yellow boards . . . . .	58
Title-page of Volume I of Cooper's <i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> . . . . .	62
Title-page of Whittier's <i>Legends of New-England</i> . .	72
Title-page of Thoreau's <i>A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers</i> , with presentation inscription .	76
Title-pages of Longfellow's <i>The Song of Hiawatha</i> and <i>The Courtship of Miles Standish</i> . . . . .	80
The second stanza on page 46 of the four issues of Whittier's <i>The Tent on the Beach</i> . . . . .	94
Title-page, and presentation inscription, of a copy of Lowell's <i>A Fable for Critics</i> . . . . .	98
A preliminary leaf of Melville's <i>White-Jacket</i> , with pencilled comment on the book by a ship-mate of Melville's on the voyage . . . . .	104
Ordinary and large paper copies of Lowell's <i>Poems</i> (1844), opened at the poem "A Dirge."	Between 110 and 111
Ordinary and "large paper" copies of Longfellow's <i>The Divine Tragedy</i> , opened at the conclusion of Part III of "The Second Passover"	Between 110 and 111
Title-page of Whittier's <i>Voices of Freedom</i> and wrapper of the only known wrapped copy . . . . .	116
Title-page of Poe's <i>Poems</i> . . . . .	118
Title-page of Volume I of Cooper's <i>Lionel Lincoln</i>	Between 122 and 123
Title-page of Volume II of Cooper's <i>Lionel Lincoln</i>	Between 122 and 123

# ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
Title-page of the first issue of Lowell's <i>Among My Books. Second Series</i> . . . . .	126
Holmes requests his publishers to make a correction, which dates their printing of <i>John Lothrop Motley</i> .	134
(Above) Part of page 78 of the first issue of Longfellow's <i>Voices of the Night</i> , with the earlier form of line 10. (Below) Stanza of the second issue, showing the later form . . . . .	136
Title-page of Emerson's <i>Nature</i> , bearing his dated inscription . . . . .	142
Cover of Mark Twain's <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> (1885) . . . . .	150
The seven wrapped parts of Irving's <i>The Sketch Book</i> . (By courtesy of the Yale University Library) . . . . .	152
The correct (left) back wrapper of Hawthorne's <i>Mosses from an Old Manse</i> ; and the incorrect (right) back wrapper . . . . .	154
Usual form of wrapper of Part I of Longfellow's <i>Outre-Mer</i> . . . . .	Between 156 and 157
Unusual form of wrapper of Part I of Longfellow's <i>Outre-Mer</i> . . . . .	Between 156 and 157
(Above) Title-page of Whittier's <i>The Supernaturalism of New England</i> , apparently anonymous; and (below) the wrapper, giving Whittier as the author . .	158
Wrapper of Cooper's <i>Le Mouchoir</i> . . . . .	160
Title-page of Melville's <i>Moby-Dick</i> . . . . .	164
Wrapper of Poe's <i>Tamerlane and Other Poems</i> . . .	168
Only known portion of the original manuscript of Hawthorne's <i>Time's Portraiture</i> . . . . .	170

## ILLUSTRATIONS

---

	FACING PAGE
Covers of <i>Grandfather's Chair</i> and <i>Liberty Tree</i> , and title-page of <i>Famous Old People</i> —Hawthorne's children's booklets . . . . .	172
Page 48 of Number 1 of Volume I of "The Atlantic Monthly," November, 1857 . . . . .	178
Title-page of <i>Illustrations of the Athenæum Gallery of Paintings</i> —Holmes's first book . . . . .	180
Autograph transcripts by Holmes of the concluding stanza from each of his two most famous poems, "The Last Leaf" and "The Chambered Nautilus." . . . .	182
Cover of Bryant's <i>Poems</i> (1821) . . . . .	Between 184 and 185
Autograph transcript by Bryant of the concluding lines of "Thanatopsis" . . . . .	Between 184 and 185
English first printings of American authors—(from left to right) Whittier, Bryant (and Irving), Hawthorne, Longfellow, Hawthorne (and Holmes) . . . . .	186
Customs and landing certificate, signed by Hawthorne as Surveyor of the Salem Customs-House, for the "Nova Scotia schooner," described on page 3 of <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> . . . . .	198
Title-page of Volume I of Irving's <i>A History of New York</i> . . . . .	Between 206 and 207
Page of the original manuscript of Irving's <i>A History of New York</i> . . . . .	Between 206 and 207

COLLECTING  
AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS





# COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

## ITS PITFALLS AND ITS PLEASURES

### I

Increased interest in collecting American first editions—Inherent complexity of their bibliography—Some examples—Typographical defects—Importance and unimportance of inserted advertisements—Emerson's *The Conduct of Life*—Bibliographical knowledge obtained from contemporary advertisements—Portentous titles—"The long and the short of it."

BOOK-COLLECTORS play a more useful part in the literary sphere than is generally conceded. The usual argument is that the collector merely recognizes with his purse the reputation which the critic has consolidated with his pen; but it is not so simple as all that. There are sheeplike collectors, just as there are shallow critics, but there are also very intelligent collectors, a growing army of them, to whose broad sympathies and delving curiosity we largely owe the rediscovery of forgotten talent and the revivifying of neglected epochs.

From different angles and with different mo-

tives both critic and collector approach the same goal. It is, for instance, due just as much to the collector as to the critic that American authors of the Nineteenth Century are at last attracting serious investigation. Of the outstanding writers from Washington Irving to Mark Twain, some were men of genius, some merely of talent, but all have a recognized place in the formative history of American life and literature. One by one they are being analyzed by the new school of critic-psychologists and appraised afresh. It was work that needed doing, but do not let us forget that it is the collectors who are making much of that work possible. By routing amongst old books and documents, by getting back to original sources, they are not only paving the way for the critics, but are enabling us to see the whole age in that fresh light which comes from perspective.

For in such collecting vast stores of facts are gathered, and from the sum of them there will gradually emerge a complete picture, convincing in its minute detail, of the rise of American letters in relation to the country's growth and problems. If this be considered an exaggeration,

just think what the world has missed through there being no book-collectors in the Elizabethan era. What priceless quarto plays and pamphlets, what fabulous manuscripts and autograph material, have vanished for ever! And that is not all: the collector, with his hoarding instincts and his love of final accuracy, would have handed down to posterity an intimate glimpse of the period in place of the fragmentary and uncertain knowledge we now possess. Even then there were critics of a sort, crabbed and pedantic though they mostly were. What the time lacked was book-collectors who, whatever their personal failings might have been, would at any rate have done what all book-collectors do—treasured for the future.

These few words are not meant as a palliating excuse for the collecting of American first editions. That would be to surrender the fort. Hobbies are their own excuse, justifying themselves as anodynes in an imperfect world, but there is no reason why collectors and bibliographers—their silent and tireless handmaidens, who, like termites, build up from beneath—should not receive the recognition they deserve. Their

work is of wider importance than is immediately apparent, and it is all to the good that American book-collectors are displaying more and more interest in the writings of their own countrymen.

Yes, all to the good. It is only within the last few years that the subject has been tackled seriously by more than a few students, and though, in times gone by, such men as Foley, Chamberlain (the outstanding example of a man distinguished both as collector and bibliographer), Livingston and Wakeman have made original researches of high value, much remains to be done. Mr. Foley, the Nestor of them all, whose knowledge is unrivaled and whose *American Authors, 1795-1895* (1897) has never been superseded, is still with us; while of the younger men none has made more far-reaching discoveries than Mr. Carroll A. Wilson.

But, as I say, much remains to be done. The bibliography is inherently complex, owing to the methods, elaborate in certain respects, haphazard in others, of American book-production during the last century, and every toiler in the field will find that he is faced with problems which he must solve for himself as best he can.

It is useless to rely too much on the accepted guides, which are inadequate, and the collector must grope his way along, gathering scraps of information as he goes, balancing evidence like a lawyer, scenting out clues like a detective. It all adds to the excitement of the game, which, like another well-known game, depends for its perennial popularity as much upon the pursuit as upon the capture.

Those old American publishers seem, with the frequent help of their authors, to have taken a devilish delight in laying traps for the unwary. There is hardly a famous first edition in American literature that does not bristle with points. Many of these books will be dealt with later on in different sections, but as I want to drive home this cardinal fact at once, I have selected from typical authors a few other examples which, in their variety, help one to an idea of what American bibliography amounts to. In the circumstances I will be austere brief. The first issue of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* (1837) wrongly gives in the contents the fifth story as beginning on page 78, an error which is corrected to page 77 in the second issue, while the first

issue of his *True Stories from History and Biography* (1851) has "Cambridge: Printed by Bolles and Houghton" on the reverse of the title, and the second has "Thurston, Torry & Emerson, Printers"; the first issue of Lowell's *A Year's Life* (1841)—or, at any rate, the very first copies of it that were circulated—does not contain an errata slip, while the first issue of *Under the Willows* (1869) does contain one noting that line 3 of the second stanza on page 224 wrongly begins with "Thy" instead of "Its" as in the second issue; the first issue of Holmes's *The Poet at the Breakfast-Table* (1872) has the misprint "Breakfast-Talle" in the head-line of page 9, while the first binding of *Over the Teacups* (1891) has "Tea-Cups" on the spine and front of the cover, yellow edges and yellow end-papers (in a few copies the end-papers are white), as opposed to "Teacups" (to match the title-page), gilt top, plain other edges and white end-papers of the second binding; the first issue of Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* (1869) must not have the illustration of Napoleon III on page 129 which is present in the second issue, while the first issue of *Life on the Mississippi*

When the Lord finished the  
world, he pronounced it good.  
That is what I said about my  
first work too. But Time, I tell  
you, Time takes the confidence  
out of these incautious early  
opinions. It is more than likely  
that ~~he~~ he thinks about the world, now,  
pretty much as I think about the  
"Innocents Abroad." The fact  
is, there is a trifle too much water  
in both.

Yours truly  
S. L. Clemens  
Mark Twain

Hartford Nov. 6, 1886.

Autograph letter by Mark Twain concerning *Innocents Abroad*, with unusual double signature.





## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

(1883) must have an illustration at page 441 which is not present in the second issue.

One could continue such a list until it became a monotonous drone, but these few varied instances achieve my purpose. What I want to keep on impressing is that American first editions are the trickiest books in the world. And new things about them are always being unearthed. The knowledge of yesterday is the ignorance of tomorrow, and the collector should never take for granted that nothing remains for him to do but to spend his money. A great deal remains for him to do, both in the collating of texts and in the examination of titles, preliminary pages, and head-lines. We are at the beginning of our knowledge, not at the end, and it is morally certain that many accepted facts are wrong and that many unascertained ones are vital. A vigilant scepticism and a capacity to seize upon essentials are among the bibliographer's best assets, and the only method by which he can arrive at even approximate truth is to compare copy after copy of the same books.

Above all, let him cultivate an instinct of proportion and be guided by common-sense. Like

everything else, book-collecting tends to become more and more concerned with detail. This is all right in so far as the detail is relevant, but, unfortunately, frivolous or even imaginary points are everlastingly being announced. Since books are valuable property, many people concentrate on the commercial rather than on the scientific aspect of bibliography; and this, in turn, results in certain readily saleable books being over-scrutinized, while others, which call for research, are ignored. There is a huge amount of fruitful work to be done, but the whole thing will be made to look ridiculous if every page has to be examined with a microscope. That is not bibliography; that is insanity. Probably no two copies of any book are entirely alike.

Nowadays earnest attention is paid to missing letters and broken type. But though these may tell a coherent story, they may not; and even if they do, the story may not be what one supposes. Letters or words may fall out of the case, or the plate may break, at any stage of the printing; while faulty type may be an original defect or due to poor presswork or the result of accident or over-use. Or there may be an appearance of it

owing to a piece of paper or some other substance getting stuck in the matrix over a few words or letters. The ragged look which this last gives, entirely unlike the appearance of broken type, may be studied to perfection on lines 19, 20 and 21 of page 161 of Holmes's *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1858). In the later bindings—those that have no rings on the spine—the type on these pages is perfect, which means, undoubtedly, that the type had been wiped clean of the offending “foreign bodies.”

Everything, naturally, depends on the strength of the evidence. When, as in most copies of Melville's *Israel Potter* (1855), we find broken type on a number of pages—it is worst on page 116—we are entitled to argue that they are probably of a second issue. (By the way, Mr. Meade Minnigerode, whose bibliography of Melville is well done, says that the first issue is bound in green cloth and the second in a cloth of brownish color. But that is rather misleading, for both issues may also now and then be found in red cloth.) Again, when we note a progressive breakdown of type, as in the later issues of the first edition of Holmes's *The Autocrat of the*

*Breakfast-Table* (1858)—see especially page 95, where the breaks begin in the second issue, increase in the third, and increase still more in the fourth—we cannot but draw a definite conclusion. Especially is this the case where, as in the *Autocrat*, in which the binding differs from issue to issue, there is corroborative evidence.

An even better example of this is Emerson's *Representative Men* (1850). Not only does the second issue contain broken type in about twenty places—see, in particular, page 276, where it is most glaring—but it is printed on much thicker paper than the first, is without the hour-glass design on the sides of the binding, and has the word "Men" on the spine in heavier type. Similarly, though a broken "C" on the title-page of the same author's *The Conduct of Life* (1860) denotes the fourth issue (not the second, as is usually supposed), it is only proof positive on account of other and material differences to be described a little further on.

By inference, also, such errors may, on occasion, be assumed to be true points of a first issue. If, for instance, it is known that every author's presentation copy of a book has a dropped word,



REPRESENTATIVE MEN:

SEVEN LECTURES.

BY R. W. EMERSON.

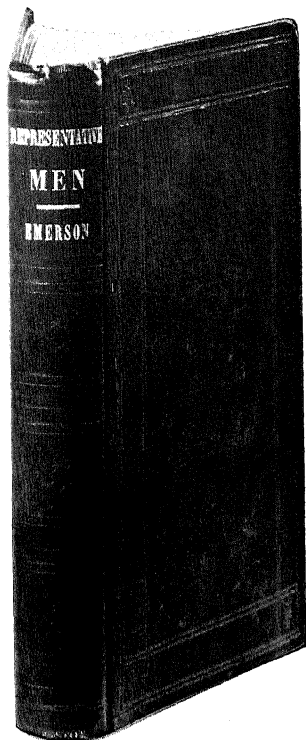
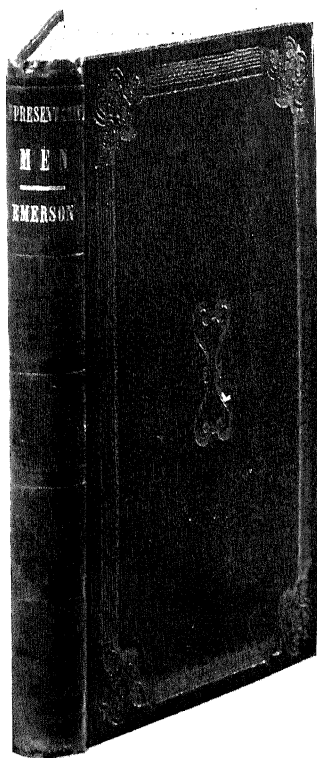
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BOSTON:  
PHILLIPS, SAMPSON AND COMPANY,  
110 WASHINGTON STREET.  
1850.

Nathaniel Hawthorne  
from  
R. W. Emerson

December, 1850.

Title-page of *Representative Men*, with presentation inscription of the book to Hawthorne.



Correct (left) and incorrect (right) bindings of Emerson's *Representative Men*.





it is reasonable to deduce, seeing that the author usually gets the earliest copies, that that dropped word is a valid point. But it is always dangerous to be too dogmatic; it was formerly believed that copies of Longfellow's *Evangeline* (1847) with "Lo" instead of "Long" on line 1 of page 61 were first issues, but now it is known that the "Lo" runs right through to the fourth edition, while the proof-sheet—still preserved in Longfellow's library—as well as the poet's own copy, with his signature and autograph corrections, read "Long" correctly.

But, putting exceptional cases aside, the collector should be chary of accepting statements as to the real meaning of broken type or dropped letters. Why—just to give a few examples—should we assume that a first issue of Emerson's *English Traits* (1856) must have the word "and" on the last line of page 304 undamaged—in copies dated 1857 and with "Sixth Thousand" on the title-page the type is perfect; that a first issue of Holmes's *Elsie Venner* (2 vols., 1861) depends on the presence of the first "r" in "richer" on page 13 of Volume I; or that the semicolon after the word "grace" on page 146 of

Whittier's *In War Time* (1864) must be unbroken? The recent discovery of a copy of Howells's *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885) which contains in the author's handwriting the words "First copy," and yet has the broken type on page 176, which is supposed to be the sign of the second issue, should warn us against cocksure assertions in this direction. (In this particular book the so-called "short" advertisements, on the reverse of the half-title, always identify the earlier copies.) And we should remember that while corroborative evidence is often forthcoming to a certain extent, yet it is only too true that books have a maddening habit of turning up half "right" and half "wrong." And so; unless the proof be overwhelming, it is always well to maintain a non-committal attitude where defective type is concerned.

And may I suggest with all due diffidence that if the importance of broken or missing letters is sometimes exaggerated, the same thing is true of inserted advertisements. Here I am on dangerous ground, for the study of them is both intense and progressive, and yet it is surely incontrovertible that unless an advertisement be

## 51 COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

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printed as part of one of the sheets of a book, it is not really part of the book itself. People lay stress on the presence or absence of advertisements, on their wording and on their dates, but when one considers to what extent chance is responsible for it all, one really cannot take their arguments very seriously. Advertisement lists are no certain criterion of anything. A pile of such lists is placed beside each girl who is gathering the sheets for the binder: she may forget to put the list in every copy, the supply may momentarily run short, or she may have to fall back on a bundle of previous lists when the current one gives out altogether. Indeed, almost any little accident may happen—and does frequently happen—to upset the logical reasoning of a subsequent bibliographer.

Of course, when an advertisement is peculiar to one book or to a limited group of books, it has more meaning, even if it be not part of a signature, than a mere “house” list which goes into every available book. For example, the one-leaf advertisement of “The Atlantic Monthly” at the very end of Thoreau’s *The Maine Woods* (1864) is of interest because nearly every copy reads

“The Fourteenth Volume” and “July, 1864” and it is quite unusual to find one that reads “The Thirteenth Volume” and “January, 1864.” And one should never buy a copy of Mark Twain’s *The Celebrated Jumping Frog* (1867) that does not have a one-leaf tinted advertisement facing the title-page, because that advertisement, as far as is known, only appeared in the first issue—in the issue, that is to say, in which there is no broken “i” in the final line of the last page.

But even so, it is stretching credulity to argue that the dates and wording of inserted advertisements, however individual, are an absolute test of priority of issue. The famous case of Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), in which the advertisements are usually dated 1850 in the first edition and 1849 in the second (it is an obvious example of a book’s sudden and unexpected popularity finding the publishers napping), shows the fallacy of turning into an immutable rule any contention for early dates in advertisements. I am not arguing against the consideration of advertisements, for they add a spice to collecting and do tell us something; I am only arguing against their having, save in specified



*THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY,*  
MAGAZINE OF LITERATURE, ART, AND POLITICS,  
IS UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED AS THE  
BEST AMERICAN MAGAZINE.

~~~~~  
THE THIRTEENTH VOLUME

Of the ATLANTIC commences with the number for January, 1861. Its commencement affords the Publishers an occasion to say that the ATLANTIC has attained a circulation and prosperity never equalled by any American magazine of its class.

The prosperity of the Atlantic enables its conductors to employ the most eminent talent of the country in its columns. All the best known writers in American literature, contributing constantly to its pages, give it the sole right to be known as our national magazine. Its staff comprises the following names among its leading contributors:—

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL,  
HENRY W. LONGFELLOW,  
LOUIS AGASSIZ,  
RALPH WALDO EMERSON,  
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE,  
CHARLES SUMNER,  
ROBERT DALE OWEN,  
GEORGE W. CURTIS,  
C. C. HAZEWELL,  
T. W. HIGGINSON,  
AUTHOR OF "Margaret Howth,"  
MRS. JULIA W. HOWE,  
MRS. A. D. T. WHITNEY,  
T. BUCHANAN READ,  
OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES,  
JOHN G. WHITTIER,  
GAIL HAMILTON,  
E. P. WHIPPLE,  
HAYARD TAYLOR,  
CHARLES E. NORTON,  
FRANCIS PARKMAN,

JOHN G. PALFREY,  
GEORGE S. HILLARD,  
HENRY GILES,  
WALTER MITCHELL,  
HENRY T. TUCKERMAN,  
JOHN WEISS,  
FRANCIS WAYLAND, Jr.,  
WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,  
MRS. H. B. STOWE,  
HARRIET MARTINEAU,  
"IK MARVEL,"  
DAVID A. WANSON,  
"THE COUNTRY PARSON,"  
ROSE TERRY,  
HARRIET E. PRESCOTT,  
ROBERT T. S. LOWELL,  
J. T. TROWBRIDGE,  
JOSIAH P. QUINCY,  
PROF. A. D. WHITE,  
EDWARD E. HALL,  
F. SHELDON.

T E R M S .

The ATLANTIC is for sale by all Book and Periodical Dealers. Price, 25 cents a number. Subscriptions for the year, \$3.00, postage paid.

CLUB PRICES.—Two Copies for one year \$5.00, and each additional subscription at the same rate; and an Extra Copy gratis for every Club of Ten Subscribers; or Eleven Copies for \$45.00.

*In all Clubs, subscribers pay their own postage, 24 cents per year.*

TICKNOR AND FIELDS, Publishers,  
135 Washington Street, Boston.

Earlier terminal advertising leaf in Thoreau's *The Maine Woods*, referring to the volume of "The Atlantic Monthly" commencing in January, 1861.

**THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY,**  
**MAGAZINE OF LITERATURE, ART, AND POLITICS,**  
 IS UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED AS THE  
**BEST AMERICAN MAGAZINE.**

~~~~~  
**THE FOURTEENTH VOLUME**

Of the ATLANTIC commences with the number for July, 1864. Its commencement affords the Publishers an occasion to say that the ATLANTIC has attained a circulation and prosperity never equalled by any American magazine of its class.

The prosperity of the Atlantic enables its conductors to employ the most eminent talent of the country in its columns. All the best known writers in American literature, contributing constantly to its pages, give it the sole right to be known as our national magazine. Its staff comprises the following names among its leading contributors:—

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 GEORGE W. CURTIS,  
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 THOMAS W. PARSONS,  
 MRS. A. D. T. WHITNEY,  
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 OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES,  
 JOHN G. WHITTIER,  
 GAIL HAMILTON,  
 E. P. WHIPPLE,  
 HAYARD TAYLOR,  
 CHARLES E. NORTON,  
 FRANCIS PARKMAN,

JOHN G. PALFREY,  
 GEORGE S. HILLARD,  
 HENRY GILES,  
 WALTER MITCHELL,  
 HENRY T. TUCKERMAN,  
 JOHN WEISS,  
 FRANCIS WAYLAND, Jr.,  
 WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,  
 MRS. H. B. STOWE,  
 HARRIET MARTINEAU,  
 "IK MARVEL,"  
 DAVID A. WARSON,  
 "THE COUNTRY PARSON,"  
 ROSE TERRY,  
 HARRIET E. PRESCOTT,  
 ROBERT T. S. LOWELL,  
 J. T. FROWBRIDGE,  
 JOSIAH P. QUINCY,  
 PROF. A. D. WHITE,  
 EDWARD E. HALE,  
 F. SHELDON.

**TERMS.**

The ATLANTIC is for sale by all Book and Periodical Dealers. Price, 25 cents a number. Subscriptions for the year, \$3.00.

The postage on the ATLANTIC (21 cents per year) must be paid at the office where it is received.

TICKNOR AND FIELDS, *Publishers,*  
 135 Washington Street, Boston.

Later terminal advertising leaf in Thoreau's *The Maine Woods*, referring to the volume of "The Atlantic Monthly" commencing in July, 1864.





cases, any great bibliographical significance. For bibliography is a science and not a conjuring trick, and you cannot twist into it any meaning you choose.

When it comes to making "house" list advertisements a test of priority we have to be very watchful. Consider Longfellow's *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863). This book contains Ticknor & Fields's general list of 22 pages of advertisements, and it is now held that if, opposite entries on pages 11 and 21 respectively, the words "nearly ready" are present, that denotes a first issue. But the same list, with precisely the same wording, is to be found in such other well-known books of the period as Whittier's *In War Time* (1864) and Holmes's *Soundings from the Atlantic* (1864). And if it appeared in these books, one may be quite sure that it appeared in a score of obscure books now worth a few cents apiece. And yet *Tales of a Wayside Inn* with the "nearly ready" fetches about \$50.00, if fine, and without it about \$10.00. The only result of this false arguing, leading to these false values, is to encourage a profitable swindle. I am not denying that the "nearly ready" list (very rarely, by the

way, these two words are found opposite only one entry) is the first form of the advertisement—the two lists show many other variations—and should appear in the earliest copies of the book; but I am denying that the evidence it gives is final. The two lists may have been in print at the same time or the faker can change them to suit the demand.

In the same way, the earlier form of the August advertisements in Hawthorne's *Tanglewood Tales* (1853) recites that the book is "Just out," while the later form deletes these words, substituting "Price, 88 cts."—and thereby creates further opportunity for dishonest craftsmanship. From a battered copy of the first issue the advertisements may be removed and used to replace the advertisements in a choice copy of the second issue. (It is stated, I admit, that there are other differences between the two issues, but, whether this be true or not, the point I have mentioned is the one looked for by collectors.)

Indeed, we must keep vividly before us the fundamental irrelevance of inserted advertisements. Many American first editions, such as

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

Longfellow's *Kavanagh* (1849), Whittier's *Songs of Labor* (1850), Holmes's *Songs in Many Keys* (1862) and a host of others, can be found both with and without them—incidentally, the copies in gift bindings never have advertisements—and though the collector of heroic mould may want to possess examples of both, the ordinary man may well be content with either. Certainly the copies with advertisements have the attraction of apparent completeness, but in reality those without them are also complete. By the same token, the leaflet advertising the Waverley novels which is often pasted between the front end-papers in the very earliest copies of Longfellow's *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858) is no essential part of the book; although usually present, it is missing from the Longfellow family copies, while, on the other hand, it is sometimes to be found in copies dated 1859.

And what can one definitely imply from the dates on advertisements, those dates which the average cataloguer lingers over so gloatingly, even when one knows the actual month of publication? In the first edition of Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851)

—or, at any rate, in editions all dated 1851  
—the advertisements appear dated March, 1851;  
May, 1851; October, 1851; July, 1852; December, 1852: while in the first edition of Thoreau's *Walden* (1854) they are dated either March, April, May, June or October, 1854. But it is quite likely in the first case, and more than likely in the second, that some copies of these books with later advertisements were distributed before some copies with earlier. For we must remember that it was frequently more convenient for a publisher to fall back on an old list, when the current one ran out, than to print a new one. *The House of the Seven Gables* was published toward the end of March, and in that book, therefore, the March advertisements are probably the earliest; though, as publishers look ahead, it is possible that copies with the May advertisements are the right ones. But as to *Walden*, that book was not published till August, and therefore it is reasonable to suppose that copies with the June or October advertisements are prior to those with advertisements dated March, April, or May. It is true that in the Wakeman library there was a presentation copy

from Thoreau containing the April list—but when was the book presented? Without a date the author's signature is no evidence, for authors have the genial habit (sometimes, it must be admitted, it is an uncongenial burden) of giving their books away to friends or admirers at any time. To be absolutely certain which are the earliest advertisements in a book, we must ascertain the precise date of publication and then find an inscribed copy (not necessarily by the author) carrying approximately the same date. It is largely a matter of luck, and in any case such advertisements are only fortuitously to be counted as part of the book.

But when an advertisement is, as I said before, part of a sheet, then it *is* part of the book. (Or, parenthetically, in those rare cases where the end-papers are advertisements, as in Holmes's *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1858).) The one-page advertisement at the end of Hawthorne's *Our Old Home* (1863) is essential because it is the last leaf of signature 25. If that one page were missing the book would be imperfect, whereas Whittier's *The Bay of Seven Islands* (1883)—to give an example—is just as

perfect with or without the 16 pages of inserted advertisements that are sometimes present. As far as we know, that is to say, for if it could be proved by documentation that the advertisements appeared only in the earlier or only in the later copies, such proof would cancel any theory. For instance, we do know that the 8 pages of "Press Notices" in Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855) came only in the last issue of the first edition, and that is a case, therefore, where advertisements cannot be ignored.

Another example of an advertising leaf which is an integral part of the book is the leaf facing the title of Holmes's *Over the Teacups* (1891), which bears a long advertisement of his works, and is continuous with the leaf containing pages 13 and 14. In its earliest form, this leaf does not price *Over the Teacups*, and the set of his works just below is stated to contain 10 volumes for \$17.00; obviously, the publishers were at first a bit uncertain of themselves, since the vast majority of copies add the price for the *Teacups*, \$1.50, and therefore offer below a set of 11 volumes for \$18.50. The later forms of the book are very common, but this earliest form is

very scarce, and up to the present time has been observed only in the copies with yellow edges and white end-papers.

An interesting case in which the presence of advertisements is a bad factor in one sense but a revealing factor in another has to do with the spurious issue of the third edition of *Leaves of Grass*. The genuine third edition was produced by Thayer & Eldridge of Boston in 1860-1, but the sheets were later sold to a New York publisher called Worthington, who about 1879 printed an edition from them, which, as far as he could manage it, was a replica of the Boston edition. Being too clever by half, he added a few pages of advertisements of his other publications at the end, forgetting that one of them, *Through the Looking-Glass*, did not make its bow till 1872. The oversight was soon discovered, and in subsequent issues—for he kept on reprinting from these plates for years, making the imitation of the genuine edition still better—the advertisements were dropped. If, therefore, one gets a copy with the advertisements one can say that one has the first issue of the spurious edition of the third edition of *Leaves of Grass*

—but that is no great consolation! (In any event, Worthington's reprint should deceive nobody, for all these spurious editions omit the words, "Electrotyped at the Boston Stereotype Foundry. Printed by George C. Rand and Avery," present in the genuine edition, on the reverse of the title-page.)

There is one book at least, Emerson's *The Conduct of Life* (1860), which carries within itself a convincing demonstration of the difference between advertisements that are unimportant, relatively important, and very important. Certain copies of this book contain 16 pages of advertisements, sometimes dated December, 1860, and sometimes January, 1861. It is unimportant whether the December list is present or not, but it is of some importance when the list is dated January, because, judging from examined copies, that does not appear in issues prior to the fifth. On the other hand, the presence or absence of a one-page advertisement at the beginning of this work is of real importance. In the first issue there is no advertisement leaf facing the title; in the second issue there is an advertisement leaf pasted to the title-page; in the third



issue the advertisement is printed as part of a four-page signature (the other three pages being blank) and faces the half-title; in the fourth and subsequent issues the advertisement is actually printed on the back of the half-title. Furthermore, in the second and third issues *The Conduct of Life* is referred to in the advertisement as "nearly ready," whereas in the fourth and later issues these words are omitted; while in the fifth and sixth issues the words "Considerations by the Way; Illusions" are added to the description of the book given in the advertisement. Thus we are able to trace the order of the issues, step by step, by means of this one-page advertisement.

The bibliography of *The Conduct of Life* is so complex that I will go off at a tangent for a moment to describe it more in detail. To begin with, the back-strip is sometimes lettered, "Conduct/of/Life/Emerson," and sometimes, "Emerson's/Writings/Conduct/of Life." In the ordinary way, one would suppose that the book was issued in both bindings more or less simultaneously, the first being the distinctive form for a new book and the second being the

form to match a current edition of his previous works. And yet an advertisement slip in "The Atlantic Monthly" for December, 1860, shows that the "second" binding was quite probably the original one. That slip reads in part, "On Saturday, December 8th, will be Published: Conduct of Life, By Ralph Waldo Emerson. Uniform with his previous Works. 1 Volume. Price \$1." Admittedly this is not conclusive, for, apart from the lettering, the appearance of the two bindings is the same, and in any case a reference to one particular form does not preclude the possibility of there having been another; but the fact remains that within my experience the first issue of *The Conduct of Life* does always seem to turn up in the second binding. However, I have not examined many copies, and I dare say the real truth is that every issue appeared in both bindings. Time will certainly show.

The broken "C" on the title-page, of which mention was made previously, appears *only* in the fourth issue; while in this same issue there is sometimes a defective "o" on the last line of page 68. In the fifth and sixth issues a "w" on the last line of page 68 is defective. (Though

JUST PUBLISHED:  
**THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE,**

A SERIES OF PAPERS DERIVED FROM THE FIRST TWELVE NUMBERS OF THE

**ATLANTIC MONTHLY.**

The success of this series has been unequalled in Magazine literature; no articles in American periodicals, and, it is believed, none from English pens, unless it may be the *Academy*, have ever attained such a widespread popularity. The publishers believe that this book will have a permanent interest, and will take its place with the works of our few humorists whom the world agrees to call great.

You meet and almost affectionate appreciation of nature; for knowledge of what is most subtle in human thought and feeling; for a genial humor that makes even satire amiable; and for poetry by turns witty, tender, graceful, and imaginative, these "table talks" may fairly challenge comparison in the whole field of literature.

*In one Vol. 12mo. About 350 pages. With Characteristic Illustrations by Hopkin, and a copious Index. Price \$3.00.*

THE FIRST EDITION OF TEN THOUSAND COPIES ALREADY SOLD!

IN PRESS: A fine edition of the *AUTOCRAT* on tinted paper, in bevelled boards, gilt.

**MR. EMERSON'S LONG PROMISED NEW BOOK.**

*On Saturday, December 6th, will be Published:*

**CONDUCT OF LIFE.**

By **RALPH WALDO EMERSON.**

Uniform with his previous Works. 1 volume. Price \$1.

**CONTENTS:**

Fate; Power; Wealth; Culture; Behavior; Worship; Considerations  
 by the Way; Beauty; Illusions.

Copies sent by mail, free of postage, on receipt of price, etc.

**TICKNOR & FIELDS, Publishers.**

... established a new principle in the machine law of the Mediterranean. This was a pathologic delusion. The moment when the President and the Pacha was simply one of amount. One fact was willing to pay

ed, and promises to give the second other dollars. In his Highness, the Pacha, will only command his men to keep the peace on the high seas. This point is not so generally exhibited here, but it is quite as correct as the other, and as true to the

(Above) Advertisement from the inside of the back wrapper of "The Atlantic Monthly" for December, 1858 (see page 29). (Below) Advertising slip pasted on the first page of text of "The Atlantic Monthly" for December, 1860.



I draw attention to these broken letters, it would never surprise me to find copies of the various issues that did not bear me out—once more, a single broken letter is, of itself, no certain proof of issue.)

In the first four issues all the poems that precede the different essays are in very small type; in the fifth issue some of the poems are in this same type and some in a larger; while in the sixth issue all the poems are in the larger type. (This “fifth issue” is, of course, really a freak or “sport” issue, a mixture of the sheets of the fourth and the sixth; but the bibliography of the book is more easily described if this hybrid be given a separate numeration.)

And finally, the first four issues are printed on a thinner, finer and whiter paper than the fifth and sixth.

Whether this tells the whole story of *The Conduct of Life* may be doubted. Indeed, it is more than likely that other people possess other theories as well as other facts, for when a book is so crowded with points nobody can tell when finality has been reached and anybody can compress them into a pet notion. But I trust that the dis-

covery that "ledger" is mis-spelled "leger" on the second last line of page 204 will cause no furore; as far as I am aware the mistake occurs in every copy of every issue. If, in truth, it is a mistake in the sense that it was an oversight; the Concord circle seem to have spelled the word that way, and it can be found thus on line 13 of page 300 of Thoreau's *Walden* (1854).

But let us return to the subject of advertisements. However unimportant they usually are from a bibliographical standpoint, they ought always to be read, because they sometimes contain revealing information about other books. For instance, apart from a rather ambiguous allusion in one of his letters, our only proof until recently that Longfellow was in any way concerned with the production of *Le Ministre de Wakefield* (1831), which the title-page describes as "par M. Hennequin," is an advertisement appearing in the second edition of his *Elements of French Grammar* (1831) in which Longfellow is definitely given as the author. (As a matter of fact, all that he did to *Le Ministre de Wakefield*, as we now know from the copy which went to the printer, was to correct 11 typographical errors

in Hennequin's text, add an "e" to the French spelling "Shakespear," and change throughout the French system of quoting passages to the English system—still, this shows that to that extent he did edit the book.)

Another example of information from advertisements concerns the first general collection of Whittier's poems, *Poems Written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States, between the Years 1830 and 1838* (1837). It is widely asserted that this was an unauthorized collection made by Knapp, his friend and publisher, and was produced without the poet's knowledge. And the ordinary evidence is certainly to that effect. The "Introductory Remarks" contain effusive praise of Whittier, and the "Note" which heads the supplementary pages added to the second issue begins, "In compliance with the urgent request of a large number of the admirers of Whittier, this volume was issued from the press, with very little time for revision, while the author was absent from Boston." Moreover, Pickard, who was Whittier's literary executor and wrote his life, gives his imprimatur to the statement that the book was issued

without Whittier's knowledge. And yet this can scarcely be so. Apart from the absurdity of supposing that Knapp, who was Whittier's co-worker in the anti-slavery movement, would have been such a rascal, it happens that an advertisement is in existence which proves almost conclusively that Whittier knew all about the publication beforehand. In a scarce little pamphlet, also published by Knapp, entitled *Letters from John Quincy Adams to his Constituents* (1837), which was edited by Whittier and contains a two-page introduction signed with his initials as well as two of his poems, there appears this notice: "Will be published, June 1, and for sale at 25 Cornhill, Boston, 'Poems written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States, between the years 1830 and 1837 [*sic*]; by John G. Whittier.'" A man could hardly edit a book without knowing its contents, and since this advertisement was printed at the foot of page 72, as part of the page, and immediately following one of Whittier's poems, it is fairly obvious that it was printed with Whittier's complete approval. A likely explanation is that on being approached he made a tentative selec-



That all his fathers taught is vain ?  
That Freedom's emblem is the chain?—

Its life, its soul, from *Slavery* drawn ?  
False—foul—profane ! go—teach as well  
Of holy Truth from Falsehood born !  
Of heaven refreshed by airs from hell !  
Of Virtue nursed by open Vice !  
Of demons planting paradise !

Rail on, then, "brethren of the South"—  
Ye shall not hear the truth the less—  
No seal is on the Yankee's mouth,  
No fetter on the Yankee's press !  
From our Green Mountains to the sea,  
One voice shall thunder—WE ARE FREE !

IT WILL BE PUBLISHED, JUNE 1,

And for sale at 25 Cornhill, Boston,

"POEMS, written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States, between the Years 1830 and 1837; by JOHN G. WHITTIER."—Embellished with a fine English copper-plate engraving; the design suggested by reading Cowper's poem entitled the "Morning Dream."



tion of his anti-slavery poems, and left the rest to the editor.

Advertisements do, indeed, sometimes give us "inside" information of a most valuable kind. For example, though it is frequently claimed that the large paper edition of Holmes's *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1859) either preceded the ordinary edition, despite its being dated a year later, or was published simultaneously with it, yet we know from an advertisement in "The Atlantic Monthly" for December, 1858, that this was not so. The advertisement states that the book has been "just published. . . . Price \$1.00," and that "the first edition of ten thousand copies [is] already sold"; and it goes on to say that there is, "In Press: a fine edition of the Autocrat on tinted paper, in bevelled boards, gilt." Then in the next number of the magazine we read in another advertisement that this fine edition has been "just published" and is priced at \$3.00. (All this evidence, by the way, is borne out by the state of the type in the large paper copies.)

Advertisements in old newspapers, also, may be profitably studied. Even without Whittier's

own evidence we could make a shrewd guess that he shared with Mirick, despite what the title-page says, the authorship of *The History of Haverhill, Massachusetts* (1832), because in "The Haverhill Gazette" for March 27, 1830, appears an advertisement of which the first sentence reads thus: "The subscriber proposes to publish a history of Haverhill, from its first settlement in 1640, to the present time. . . . John G. Whittier." The actual facts are that when Whittier left Haverhill he handed over the partly completed manuscript to Mirick, who finished off the work and then had the effrontery to publish it under his own name alone. The usually mild Whittier was so incensed that when William Lloyd Garrison showed him a copy with a presentation inscription, "From his Friend the Author," in Mirick's hand, he tore out the title-page on which alone Mirick's name appeared.

These are representative examples and most collectors could probably multiply them. Contemporary advertisements, whether in book, periodical or newspaper, are a mine which has not yet been fully explored and may still reveal unexpected veins of ore. Their silent witness

that it is totally false. In 1840 I published a book with  
this title — "The Conchologist's First Book — A System of Testi-  
ceous Malacology, arranged expressly for the use of Scholars  
in which the animals, according to Cuvier, are given  
with the shells, a great number of new species added, and  
the whole brought up, as accurately as possible, to the  
present condition of the science. By Edgar A. Poe. With  
Illustrations of 215 shells, presenting a correct type of each

genus." This, I presume, is the work referred to.  
I wrote it, in conjunction with Professor Thomas  
Wyatt, and Professor Est. Martin of Pa.<sup>a</sup> — my  
name being put to the work, as best known and  
most likely to aid its circulation. I wrote the  
Preface and "Introduction," and translated  
from Cuvier, the accounts of the animals etc.  
But school-books are necessarily made in a  
similar way: "The very title-page acknowledges  
that the animals are given "according to Cuvier".

This change is infamous and I shall prosecute  
for it, as soon as I settle my accounts with  
the "Mirror".

Truly your friend,

Ed Poe



is impressive, and by perusing them one gains, moreover, a general conception of publishing conditions in times gone by.

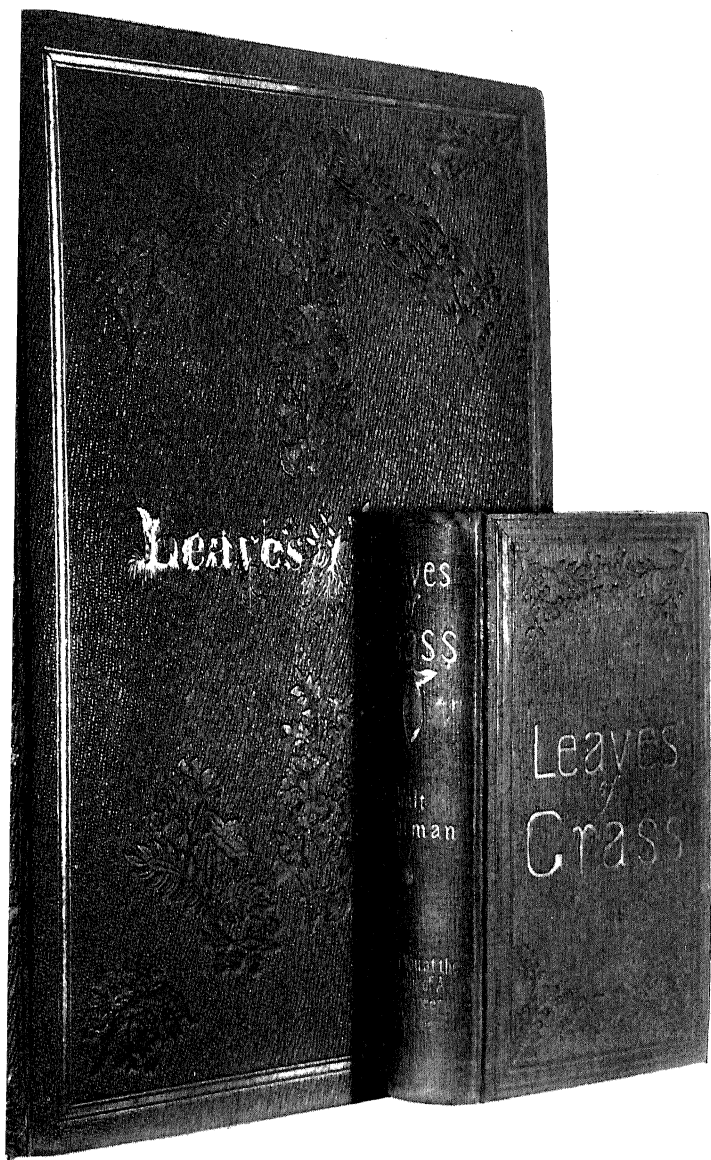
If I may revert for a moment to Whittier's *Poems Written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States, between the Years 1830 and 1838* (1837), I would like to suggest that this must be almost the most portentous title ever given to a small volume of about 100 pages. And yet even this title must bow, in American first editions, before Poe's pitiful piece of hackwork, *The Conchologist's First Book: or, a System of Testaceous Malacology, etc., etc.*, (1839). The spurious erudition of those last two words was, if one may say so, Poe's only erudition on the subject of snails. At this length of time we may smile at any alleged interest, much less knowledge, by Poe concerning these insignificant animals, but in the eighteen-forties it was no laughing matter either for his pocket-book or his pride. The letter illustrated here shows how scanty was Poe's real connection with this work, but how keen his resentment at any suggestion of plagiarism, even in malacology. Recollecting that my pages dis-

cuss pitfalls as well as pleasures, it should be added that in the first issue of this work the plates of the snails were in colors, while in the second issue they were uncolored. Doubtless the publisher's disappointment at the number of budding testaceous malacologists in the United States was responsible for the later less expensive form.

But people had different views in those days concerning the titles and the appearance of books. Just consider the two earliest editions, 1855 and 1856, of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*—a book whose title-page is as severe as the *Conchologist* is crowded. The first edition is a thin folio; the second, which contains more than twice as many poems, is a stout, squat octavo of completely different aspect. Indeed, save in their green binding, they are ridiculously unlike, and might well represent, among the books, that comic picture, so popular in years gone by among the humans, entitled "The Long and the Short of it"—which shows, if I remember, a tall lean man of meagre visage accompanied by a fat little fellow, who is puffing out his rosy cheeks in an endeavor to keep up with his striding companion.







"The Long and the Short of it"—First edition (left) and second edition (right) of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

Leaves  
*of*  
Grass.

Brooklyn, New York:  
1855.



## II

Fabrications: labels, title-pages, regilding, added numerals, extracted matter—Lessons from the type; *Evangeline*—*The Scarlet Letter*—End-papers—Built-up copies—Repair of bindings—Boards and wrappers—Preliminary and terminal blank pages—Foxing—Necessary illustrations—Inserted “slips.”

Now, having given some advice, let us proceed to definite warnings. Book-collecting is an innocent pastime which, in its apparent unworldliness, suggests an idyllic state of affairs. But, unfortunately, money enters into it, and where money enters into anything, there also enters Satan. As much ingenious faking takes place in books as in furniture, and even the expert, whether dealer or collector, has to be constantly on the alert. The whole question is complicated by the fact that book-repairing is in itself an entirely proper activity. There is no reason why a book should not be furbished up provided that, when it comes to change hands, its invisible defects are pointed out. But, of course, this means that in time the legitimately repaired books get

mixed with the fakes, through nobody's fault, and that more and more rare volumes will be found, upon examination, to be other than what they purport to be. And then the new owners will derive no satisfaction whatsoever from thinking that perhaps their "wrong" copies were patched and perfected for commendable reasons.

We may as well consider some of the standard fakes. The forging of paper labels is one of the most popular. It is so easy to rejuvenate such prized works by Irving (to mention only a couple) as *A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (3 vols., 1828) and the three separately titled volumes of 1835 which have the general title *The Crayon Miscellany*, and so many Cooper novels that there is no need even to name one more than another, by replacing with new labels the soiled, torn, or even altogether missing original ones—so easy and so paying, that the faker is very ready to oblige. He reproduces them in a simple, if not always accurate, facsimile and he proceeds to give them an air of age by dipping them in a solution of coffee.

Such fakes are usually rather obvious, though

when they are done by an artist who is not content with mere outward resemblance they can be misleading. The only safe plan is never, when in the slightest doubt, to buy a book of this kind until it has been compared with one of admitted authenticity. (And the more battered the copy you compare it with, the more likely is it to be authentic.) That is so, but it must be said, firmly if reluctantly, that one sometimes feels most secure when one is most in peril.

The forging of title-pages requires more skill, and, though it gives employment to a number of industrious people in Europe, has not as yet been much practised in America or on American books. Such forgers, as a rule, fly for higher game, but as American books become more and more valuable, we may expect to witness an increase in their attentions. Even as it is, they have not disdained to try their skill on a book like Longfellow's *Evangeline* (1847), of which there are at least two varieties, one clever and one crude, of forged title-page. So when buying any rare American book, it is as well to keep our eyes wide open; nobody can tell when the blow may fall.

As to the forging of the handwriting and signatures of American authors, that appears to be in its infancy. The lamented Robert Spring, of whom Mr. Madigan writes so entertainingly in his *Word Shadows of the Great* (1930), produced Washington documents in abundance—the widow's cruse wasn't in it for a magic supply—but authors were not worth his while. If he had lived to-day, however, they would have been, and I dare say his successors are getting ready. For all I know, indeed, they may have started work, and it would be foolhardy not to scrutinize with care any presentation volume or scrap of manuscript.

One sometimes meets with copies of rare American first editions the gilding on which looks as bright as it must have looked on the day of their publication in the middle of the last century. In certain cases this is due to the luck of their having been preserved from dust and usage, in certain other cases it is due to the fact that the gilt has been re-touched. Now genuine gilding is stamped on with gold leaf, whereas re-touching is done by painting on a solution of gold; and thus it happens that under a magnifying-glass



the real gilding presents an appearance of flakiness and corrugation, whereas the re-touched gilding shows the smoothness or the striping of paint applied with a brush. Probably there are gradations of re-touching, both in the fineness and the partial nature of the work, but if we bear in mind that genuine gilding must be pressed on with a stamp cut specially for the book, it will be seen that deception is difficult provided examination be thorough.

Certain celebrated American first editions lay themselves open to specific frauds. For example, the first issue of the first edition of Whittier's *Snow-Bound* (1866), which is very rare, differs only from the second issue, which is quite common, in having the numerals "52" printed at the foot of the last page. The result is, of course, that the "52" is now being supplied. Hitherto this forgery has been clumsy—the safeguard in all such matters is that reputable printers will not lend themselves to any imposture—but even if it were to become subtle, it would equally defeat its own end. If scarcely detectable forgeries of *Snow-Bound* could be made, collectors would cease even to look at copies devoid of a water-

tight pedigree. It would be exactly what happened with regard to Tanagra figurines: they were so impeccably faked that connoisseurs lost all interest in them. The faker is just as sinister a menace to the book-dealer as to the book-collector; indeed, he is a more sinister menace, for the book-dealer depends for his livelihood on people buying his books. (And, while I am discussing *Snow-Bound*, a word of caution should be thrown out as to the large paper copies, also with an 1866 date. It is true that there were only 50 copies so printed, but they must post-date both the first and second issues, since the text is altered in many places—see particularly at page 24, where four lines of the first edition have been replaced by six new lines, and page 25, where the first six lines are dropped out and four new ones added;—indeed, they can hardly be called the first edition at all, for their text corresponds exactly with that of the illustrated edition of 1868.) .

Wallace's *Ben-Hur* (1880) is another book which helps the forger to make a livelihood. After the first edition was disposed of, the date was removed from the title-page and the deco-

rated blue cloth of the binding was changed to one of a brown color. But, alas, a few copies of the genuine first edition were also put up in brown cloth and, alas, the famous dedication, "To the Wife of my Youth," which is popularly believed to be a sure indication of the first edition, did not have added the second line, "Who still Abides with me"—not a very felicitous way of making a tactful remark, if one comes to think of it, as it seems to suggest either astonishment or resignation!—till three years later and until a number of editions had already been sold. And thus the forger can, and does, add "1880" to the title-page and deceive even the relatively knowing. If only Mrs. Wallace had objected earlier to the dubious wording of the first form, or if only people had begun to ask sooner who was the wife of his middle age, the forger would have been out of luck despite the delusive evidence of a few genuine brown copies.

There is another little volume by Whittier, the same *Poems Written during the Progress of the Abolition Question* (1837) mentioned before, which is very pleasing to the swindler. Two issues, the first consisting of 96 pages and the

second of 103 (104), were published in 1837. They are both rare, but the first is much the rarer and more valuable. The only apparent difference between them is this sheet of 8 pages inserted between page 96 and the final end-paper, and therefore the individual of predatory instincts removes the sheet with sufficient skill to cover up the trail, and sells his second issue as a first.

But he does not have things all his own way. In every known copy of the genuine first issue certain letters have been dropped from the first line of the second stanza on page 66. Here is the line, with brackets indicating the dropped portion: "No, Ritner:—her 'Friends,' at thy warnin[g, will]." And thus, while the correct number of pages is no absolute proof of genuineness, if a copy possesses both the correct pagination and the faulty line one may feel reasonably sure of it. Unfortunately, the test is not entirely reliable, because the line shows varying stages of completeness, even in the first issue; but, contrary to all expectation, it can be said for certain that the earlier bound copies are much less complete than the later. In some of these later ones, indeed—that is, in late copies of the

second issue—only the final “l” in “will” is missing.

This is an interesting example of the unusual conclusions dropped type sometimes leads us to, and it is worth while trying to discover what probably happened. As the sheets were printed off they were doubtless piled one on top of the other, to be taken away and bound as required. This would mean that the sheets printed last were the first to be bound; and consequently that the first copies of the book to appear would show the type at its worst. By the time the second issue (the issue with the 8 new pages) was put forth, the binder would have got down to the earliest printed sheets of the original work. How else can one explain the anomaly of a progressive improvement, instead of deterioration, of the type?

Let us examine another trap, baited with type, which Longfellow's *Evangeline* (1847) holds for any faker who himself may lay a trap. (And since a fine copy of this book is worth around \$1500, the possibility of his doing so is more than academic.) I have already stated that the very first copies read “Long” at line 1 of page

61, that in the balance of the first edition the "ng" has dropped out, and that the resulting error "Lo" persists through to the fourth edition. At that point the correction was made, and from the fourth edition on the reading is "Long." The corrections of text mentioned in the bibliographies, however, were not made until after the sixth edition.

What could be more promising for the scoundrel? Let us suppose that he owns a much-battered "Lo" first edition, and seeks its improvement. How simple for him, in the process of repair or reconstruction, to remove from his first edition signature 4, containing the "Lo" reading, and substitute for it the same signature from the fifth or sixth edition, reading "Long." The books are the same size, and the text is identical except at this one point. And, while inserted pages will tell their own story, an inserted signature, particularly in a repaired book, will defy any but the closest inspection.

And so he could pursue his course undetected, if it were not for the condition of the type-faces. In the later editions the "g" of "Long" is perfect; in the true first issue of the first edition, as

Longfellow's answer

1879.

10. Miss Adams,

In reply to your question, I would inform you that the story of Evangeline is purely historical, made historical, and really a fine even in-  
vention.

The expression of the Acadia is in historical; the wanderings of a maiden in search of her lost lover is traditional.

Longfellow explains the blending of fact and fiction in *Evangeline*.

the running out, all the details of the storm are very entire

My dear Mr. Adams,  
For the success of your *Evangeline* I am,

Yours very truly

Henry W. Longfellow





well as in the proof-sheets which preceded it, that letter has a minute break—probably resulting from the same defect that so speedily caused those two letters to drop out entirely. And thus a petty type-defect, utterly unimportant in itself, would serve the very useful purpose of completely exposing his swindle.

A trick of excising pages similar to that employed in the Whittier book last mentioned is practiced on Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855). The latest issue of the first edition—it is difficult to know what number to give it, as there are gradations of change in the binding, etc., between the earliest and the latest issues of the first edition—has 8 pages of "Press Notices" about the book inserted either at the beginning or the end. Now the veriest amateur would perceive that these could not be in the first issue, for a book has to be circulated before it can be reviewed, and therefore one constantly finds that these 8 pages have been spirited away. But here there is no great need to worry: between the earliest and the latest issues there are many points of difference. Without going elaborately into these, which might be rather misleading owing to the fact that nearly

all the points of the earliest issue *may* be absent from copies which are certainly not so late as the issue with advertisements, it should be noted that every copy with advertisements has the title and ornaments stamped in gold on the front cover alone—sometimes, indeed, the entire stamping is blind on both covers—whereas every copy without them (save a very few exceptions) has the gold stamped on both covers. There are so few of these intermediate exceptional copies that if one sees a copy with no gilt on the back cover, or possibly either cover, and yet with no advertisements one may well be suspicious; nevertheless they do exist. The other points have to do with the gilding of the edges, with the endpapers, and with the frontispiece; but, as I say, they are not completely final and are best omitted. *Leaves of Grass* is one of the most collected of American first editions, and as the copies were bound up as required and show all kinds of deceptive variations, it is of particular importance to acquire the very earliest issue of all. And for that reason it will be fully described further on in its proper place.

Whitman's *Drum-Taps* (1865) was first pub-

lished in a small edition without the supplementary 24 pages headed "Sequel to Drum-Taps" and containing "When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloom'd and other Pieces." In that state it is excessively rare, and it follows therefore, even as night follows day, that many copies now lack the supplement which formerly contained it. But it is plain sailing to detect these manipulated copies. The genuine first issue has speckled edges and very thin end-papers; the second issue has plain edges and its end-papers are thicker. Moreover, twenty-four pages being a large slice out of a small book, their removal can be traced by holding the volume sideways and looking through it.

The first edition of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) is another book which tempts the cheat. Changed by a process now to be unbared—a charmingly complete example of a brazen swindle—an appreciable number of second editions of this work are now masquerading as first editions. And yet several basic points differentiate the two editions and a casual comparison would seem to suggest that the metamorphosis is impossible. In the first edition the advertise-

ments are dated 1850, in the second 1849; in the first edition there is no preface, in the second a preface of two pages; in the first edition the shade of red in "Scarlet Letter" on the title-page is fainter than in the second, while the letters are slightly thinner (from the "S" in "Scarlet" to the comma at the end of "Letter" measures 74 millimeters in the first edition and 76 millimeters in the second edition); in the first edition the word "reduplicate" appears on line 20 of page 21, in the second this has been altered to "repudiate." (That is the word which everybody has beard of, but there are in all, as described presently, over twenty textual differences between the first and second editions of *The Scarlet Letter*, despite Hawthorne's statement that the book, as republished, did not contain one altered word.)

All true enough, but note this: *some* few copies of the second edition have the advertisements dated 1850, and even "reduplicate" is occasionally to be found in the second edition, while it is certain that the other textual points are known to very few. And how can one differentiate between two tinges of red and tiny vari-

ations in size unless both editions are before one? And what could be easier than to remove an inserted single-leaf preface?

The outlook for fraud has now grown brighter. But there is one little thing likely to be ignored by the faker, perhaps from the cynical notion that it is likely to be overlooked by his victim. In the first edition of *The Scarlet Letter* the last page of the preliminary matter is numbered "iv," in the second edition "vi," by reason of the two-page preface. A very useful fact to remember. I am not denying that a "iv" may be turned into a "vi," but if the page be held up to the light the story, good or bad, will reveal itself.

However, one copy of an alleged first edition of *The Scarlet Letter* having been seen in which the entire book was the second edition except the Contents leaf (paged iv) and page 21 (reading "reduplicate"), both not too cleverly inserted, I shall add at this point the textual differences which I have referred to—but with this caution: I am by no means certain that all these changes were made at the same time. Only a comparison of many copies that have not been tampered with can give entire assurance. I

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

have been told, as already stated, of copies of the second edition reading “reduplicate” on page 21, and all that I can say of the following list is that it represents the differences between the first and the second editions in the moderately large number of copies which have so far been examined. The variant readings are:—

<i>Page and line</i>	<i>First edition</i>	<i>Second edition</i>
21, 20	reduplicate	repudiate
41, 5	characterss of	characters of
46, 25	convulsives throes	convulsive throes
48, 8	or the shade	or in the shade
61, 5	Madam	Madame
64, 10	of the female	of her female
105, 6	became	become
117, 22	mothers' sin	mother's sin
132, 29	Catechism	Catechims
199, 4	known of it	known it
218, 9	stedfast	steadfast
238, 31	grown	prown
253, 23	stedfastly	steadfastly
300, 13	roundabout	round about

In addition to the above, the second edition adds 3 commas not found in the first edition, and deletes 9 commas found in the first edition; something under 200 lines are reset, chiefly in signa-

THE  
SCARLET LETTER,  
A ROMANCE.

BY  
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

BOSTON:  
TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.

M DCCC L.

*Elizabeth M. Hawthorne,  
From the Author.*

Title-page of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, with his presentation inscription of this book to his sister.





tures 2 and 14, without change of text, and there are other minor typographical changes. But it would assuredly be wearisome to give all of these; the alteration in the numbering of the Contents page is enough for most practical purposes. In this, as in many books, the intending forger simply cannot avoid *all* the snares.

What one may term “negative forgery”—taking out instead of putting in—has quite a recognized place in the book-rogue’s box of tricks. The first and second editions of several prominent works are identical save for a few words, such as “Second Edition,” on the front or back of the title-page. No soaring imagination is required to perceive the possibilities thus opened up—and one need only add that these possibilities have not been neglected.

Every dealer and collector can call to mind second editions which, by a simple erasure, could be made to resemble first editions. But as anybody can read what is written and as hints to detect fraud are inevitably also aids to the fraudulent, it would be rather impolitic to publish a hopeful list. Let me sound a warning, however, against the purchase of rebound copies, without

the wrappers, of Longfellow's *Poems on Slavery* (1842), unless the title-page has been examined to see whether the words "Second Edition" have been removed. In wrappers the booklet is safe, because "Second Edition" is repeated on the front one when it is, as practically always happens, the second edition, and because in that edition there are blank leaves, absent in the first, at the beginning and the end. But rebound and tinkered with it might deceive any unsuspecting person.

And let me also say something about the way in which Emerson's *Poems* (1847) is misused, for that shows up the audacity or, more probably, the ignorance of the average forger. The first edition of this book carries 4 pages of advertisements, the second carries 12 pages. I would not like to swear that this is always true, for advertisements are ticklish things, but I suspect that most forgers never even heard of it. Certainly it does not prevent them from manipulating the title-page of the second edition and passing the book off as a first, regardless of the advertisements.

Book-forgers are, indeed, deplorably incompe-

tent as a race, and it is distressing to think how often they throw away the labor of weeks by their infantile mistakes. But even if they did not make them they would still throw it away, for their craftiness can invariably be seen through. In the words of the poet, murmured sadly, if slightly inaccurately, "Faith unfaithful keeps them falsely true."

Then again, there are certain works in which "End" or "The End" is an afterthought, present only in later issues. Longfellow's *Kavanagh* (1849)—"End" is absent from the first two issues and present in the others—is an instance. It is a common book, but after all it scarcely takes a dollar's worth of energy to scratch out a few letters. The trouble is small, the reward may be considerable. Fortunately, detection is simple: the most adept artist, whether with acid or blade, cannot prevent the texture of the paper showing his handiwork when light plays full upon its surface.

A more insidious variety of fake is that to do with end-papers. It is astonishing how many old American books have had end-papers and blank pages torn out of them. (Incidentally, it is sur-

prising to find how often the end-papers in the first editions of books by an author like Melville have been, for some mysterious reason, pasted together. This is frequently done so carefully as to mislead the collector who does not know what to look for.) Probably the thrifty owners of those books used these pieces of paper for keeping the family accounts or for lighting their pipes. What did they care about the indignation of collectors yet unborn! In any event, they have made work for the faker, work that does not dismay him in the least. Most end-papers, for instance, can be fairly well matched as to color and quality. (Even the unusual gray-blue end-papers in the first edition of Wallace's *Ben-Hur* (1880) are exactly matched in another book of the same period produced by the same publisher.) Or if only half an end-paper is required, which is sometimes the case where the other and pasted-down half is sufficiently clean not to look incongruous, the join can be effected under the rim of the book in such a manner as to be practically invisible.

But speaking generally, the faker prefers to put in new end-papers altogether, as that is the

line of least resistance. In such a case their very freshness (though, of course, the real artist is likely to use old paper) should act as a warning signal and put you on your guard. Genuine old end-papers frequently show a faint yellowing along the edges and exhibit also many of the rust spots—things terribly common in American books of eighty to a hundred years ago—that mar the commencement and close of the volume. But neither test is quite convincing. Some original end-papers, even in ancient volumes foxed almost out of recognition, maintain a pristine bloom, owing to the superior quality of the glazed paper—it is an ironical consideration that the very perfection of a book may cause one to distrust it—while some new end-papers appear able to reflect speedily the impress of old rust stains. The value of such clues depends on the sum total of their force and on that “book sense” which every collector acquires in time.

Other clues are also present on occasion. Sometimes a faked end-paper will show, as a sign of the original one having been scratched off, a queer roughness beneath the surface of its pasted-

down portion, and sometimes its edges, when examined under a magnifying-glass, exhibit a waviness of line which is not there when the sheets have been cut in bulk by the binder. Sometimes, again, the faker will not remove that original pasted-down portion at all and its minute edge can be traced underlapping the new one. But these hints also are not conclusive, and I believe that every once in a while one may come upon a genuine book that looks hopelessly "wrong." All the same, it is not the sort of book I should wish to possess.

There is, however, one test which seems to me to be very convincing, although it applies only in certain cases. In some books the end-papers are pasted over the binding-thread, in other books the binding-thread is sewed through the end-papers. If, therefore, we find end-papers pasted over the thread in a volume which we know ought to have the thread showing, we can feel morally certain that there is something amiss. (Of course, it is always possible that batches of the book sent later to the binders were bound in a different style, but probability is against it.) The converse is not so true; that is to say, the thread may

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

properly be visible and yet the end-papers may have been newly inserted if the book has been recased and resewn.

This operation, which is freely performed on the scarcer American first editions, is due to various causes. Sometimes the book is dust-soiled and needs to be washed page by page, sometimes it is so loose in its covers as to require tightening, sometimes the contents are right enough but the binding is dilapidated. Unfortunately for the collector's sense of security, the covers of many a book are the same in the second and later editions as in the first; and where that is known to be so, a recased book is doubly suspicious. But the thing is carried further than that at times: from a number of copies so poor as to be worthless it is often possible to build up one fine copy, and there are plenty of treasured volumes on collectors' shelves which, as to binding, advertisements and sheets, are a hotchpotch of various copies, not all of them first editions by any means. Sometimes these volumes betray themselves not alone by their end-papers, but by faint differences in the color and height of the sheets. But how many people examine their purchases

with real care and how many even know that such tricks are played? The respectable dealer resents them as much as anybody, for his good name is dear to him and trade depends finally on the confidence of the public.

Indeed, no recased book is very satisfactory. The operation may have been essential and the result may be an entirely honest product, but it cannot help resembling a whited sepulchre. But luckily, even where the recasing has been done to deceive, nobody ought to be deceived. Nearly all recased books look too good to be true, even in those instances where the original end-papers have been bodily transferred. Moreover, most recased books are stiff and open with difficulty. As to books that have been washed, the paper has an anæmic pallor that cannot be mistaken.

The actual repair of bindings has reached a high state of efficiency. The most gruesome relic can be made to look respectable and the depredations of neglect can be smoothed away. But this in itself may be misleading, and the habit of mending the top and bottom of the spines of quite common books is rather to be regretted, although this—and, for that matter, every other



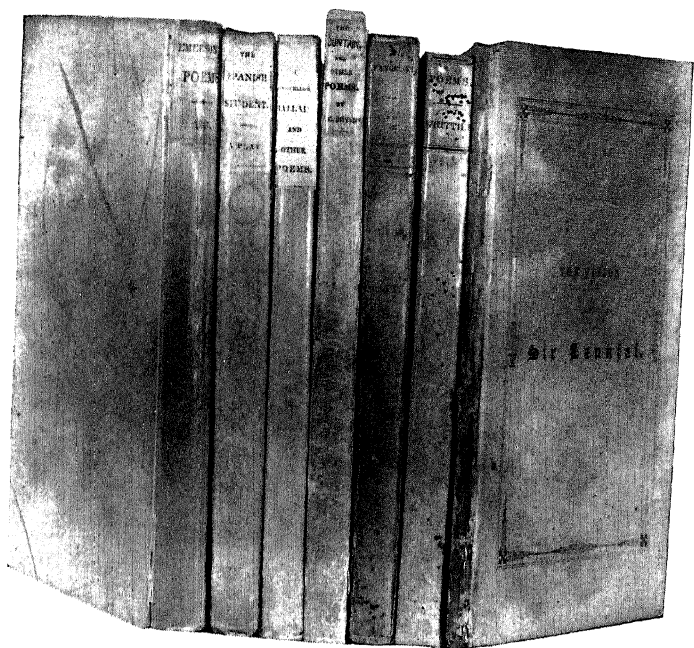
operation connected with book-repairing—proceeds more often than not from the collector's importunity to make a bad matter apparently better. Would it not be wiser to leave such cripples alone and to cherish more carefully the survivors? If people would not pack their shelves so tightly and then remove a wanted volume by pulling on the rim of the binding there would be less work for the repairers.

This is not to discourage those admirable craftsmen, but only to suggest that their services should be used as sparingly as possible and to hint that many a job is made for them quite unnecessarily. One must handle even cloth-bound books carefully, especially those American books from 1848 to 1863 which were arrayed, as such numbers of them were, in that chocolate-colored cloth beloved of Ticknor & Fields. It is of the poorest quality. Not only does it tear on the slightest provocation and show stains with an almost perverse intensity, but it wears away at the corners and chips, like friable clay, at the head and foot of the spine.

And if the cloth was wretched, what about some of the more ephemeral bindings? No won-

der it is next door to impossible to find copies in yellow glazed boards of such books as Bryant's *The Fountain and Other Poems* (1842), Longfellow's *Ballads and Other Poems* (1842), *The Spanish Student* (1843) and *Evangeline* (1847), Whittier's *Lays of My Home* (1843), Emerson's *Poems* (1847), Lowell's *The Vision of Sir Launfal* (1848), and Holmes's *Astræa* (1850) that have their back-strips intact. They were as fragile as spun glass and utterly incapable of withstanding ordinary usage. Invisible gauze and skilful repairing have preserved some copies in what one may call a state of suspended animation, but untouched copies in good condition are among the rarissima.

As for those books which are scarce even in boards or cloth, such as Bryant's *Poems* (1821), Melville's *Typee* (1846) and a number of his other works, and Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846)—this last book and all the Melvilles appeared in two volumes when in wrappers—one can only say that in paper wrappers of any kind of respectability they are to all intents unprocurable. And what about books like Longfellow's *Poems on Slavery* (1842), Haw-



Seven bindings in yellow boards. (The plate is entirely untouched.)



thorne's *The Celestial Rail-Road* (1843), and Bryant's *The White-Footed Deer* (1844), which were never bound save in wrappers, or of a book like Lowell's *Il Pesceballo* (1862), the first two editions of which were not even protected by that much flimsy covering? The answer is that if searching for a needle in a bundle of hay is apt to be disappointing, it is not apt to be quite so disappointing as a search for these little volumes in their original state.

There are so many inferior copies of American first editions, faded or broken without, stained or torn within, that really fine copies of even the common books are not so easy to come by. But patience brings its rewards. It is so much more satisfying, and so much better an investment, to wait a little longer and pay a good deal more for natural perfection. A book may look all right, but if the top and bottom of the back-strip are hard to the touch it has been "strengthened" and is not entirely all right.

As to the inside, there, too, may lurk concealed defects. For instance, one ought always to note whether any of the blank pages at the beginning or the end have been removed. The early owners,

as I described before, had the annoying habit of tearing them out here and there; while later owners, as every collector will learn for himself, frequently exhibited a disingenuous tendency to shave away the serrated edges and so conceal the deed. But if one takes the trouble it is seldom hard to detect where a leaf has been removed, although, owing to the vagaries of book-production, it does not always follow that two copies of the same book ever had the same number of blank pages. Many instances of this could no doubt be given, but if I mention that Whittier's *Mogg Megone* (1836) has sometimes two blank leaves at the end and sometimes none, that Bryant's *The Song of the Sower* (1871) has sometimes six blank leaves at the beginning and sometimes four, that Longfellow's *Aftermath* (1873) has sometimes two blank leaves at the beginning and sometimes only one leaf, and that Holmes's *Over the Teacups* (1891) has sometimes two blank leaves at the end and sometimes but one, it will be perceived that neither author nor date govern the irregularity. Anyhow, it is a bibliographical freak of small interest: where blank pages are

concerned it is the sins of commission and not of omission that count.

I am not one of those fanatics who holds that the removal of a blank page is, of necessity, a fatal defect. It depends on the volume. Very rare books are not put beyond the pale because they do not possess all their blanks—to give an extreme example, I think there is only one recorded copy of Shakespeare's First Folio that does—but one naturally prefers that they should be there. And when we reach the commoner books, it would be silly to buy them imperfect. It is all a question of proportion.

And the same argument applies in relation to foxing. The art of paper-making was not properly understood in America during the first half of the last century. As often as not the pulp was inadequately cleaned and the spores of a destructive fungus were left to spread their mycelial stain over the finished product. It is to that rather than to damp, which, as a mere encourager of growth, is a secondary cause, that we owe the disfigurement of so many early American books. But not even the wildest optimist would pass

up a copy of Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (2 vols., 1826) because it was horribly spotted, while many a meticulous collector hugs to a figurative bosom a copy of Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851) whose pages look as if they had been stricken by an unsightly and infectious rash. But there again, why buy foxed specimens of ordinary books when there are plenty that are not foxed?

The glaze they used to employ in certain wrappers and end-papers was evidently of very inferior quality, for great blotches of unhealthy purplish hue frequently mar their appearance. But as the books concerned are mostly rare it is no good worrying. Get them, I venture to suggest, whether blotched or not.

And make sure that any illustrations which ought to be in a book are in it. Being only pasted in, they often work loose, quite apart from the fact that they are sometimes pulled out in order to be framed or to perfect another copy of the work. Do not depend on a printed list of illustrations to help you; such a list is not always there and, indeed, where there is only a frontispiece, as in Thoreau's *Excursions* (1863), it is likely



*H. C. Thompson*

THE LAST  
OF  
THE MOHICANS;  
A NARRATIVE OF  
1757.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PIONEERS."

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"Mialike me not, for my complexion,  
The shadowed livery of the burnished sun."

---

IN TWO VOLUMES.  
VOL. I.

---

PHILADELPHIA:  
H. C. CAREY & I. LEA—CHESNUT-STREET.

---

1826.



not to be there. Make sure, also, that all necessary maps are present. Occasionally a copy of Thoreau's *Walden* (1854) turns up without the map facing page 307; more commonly, the map in Volume II of Irving's *Astoria* (2 vols., 1836) is missing. A vanished illustration or map leaves few traces, and the mortality is high. Therefore, know your book beforehand or look earnestly for faint tell-tale signs along the inner rims.

Finally, be certain that your book contains all the inserted matter which it ought to contain, and does not contain added "slips" which should not be there in its earliest form. Sententious as this exhortation may sound, it can, like many another didactic sentence, best be resolved by the application of common-sense, as directed to concrete examples. Should, or should not, a book contain an errata slip? Obviously, if the form without the slip always has the errors corrected, the answer is easy; the book is only in the first state when it contains the printed indication of the uncorrected errors. Is not the opposite answer equally easy when both forms contain the errors *uncorrected*? Decidedly, yes; though we must remember that there are exceptional cases,

such as the already-quoted one of Lowell's *A Year's Life* (1841), in which the earliest copies were sent out minus the errata slip. But even in that particular case, unless one be perfectly certain that the slip was never there, it would be more satisfactory to possess a copy with it. For though it is, of course, easy to forge an errata slip—a thing, by the way, about which one ought to be on one's guard—it is far easier to remove it. It is true that the casual tearing out of a slip done by the original owner after he has corrected the text is almost certain to leave a mark, but it is also true that that mark can be subsequently eliminated in such a manner as to elude anything but the most searching examination.

Let me illustrate my original contention by examples. The English edition of Emerson's *Poems* (1847), as we know from a letter which the author wrote Carlyle on Jan. 31, 1847, preceded the American printing of the same year. The English edition was set up from Emerson's not always legible manuscript, and the author had no chance to read the proofs. Few books of that period contain more errors—and surely few errors are more inspired than the

following, at line 23 of page 53, doubtless due to the English typesetter's ignorance of American fauna: "Where feeds the mouse, and walks the surly bear." The book may be found both with and without the extensive errata slip. The errors always remain uncorrected. Surely common-sense tells us that that particular slip did not appear until after the printed volume had reached Boston, since Emerson corrected for the Boston edition "the most unpardonable negligences" (as he writes Carlyle), and returned the corrections to England.

And from other sources we know that in this case the common-sense answer is the true answer. All copies which never had the errata slip are of the first issue, with "Chapman Brothers" at the base of the spine, the design on the back cover stamped in blind, and with advertisements dated Nov. 16, 1846. The second issue, with the slip, reads "John Chapman" at the base of the spine, has a gilt design on the back cover, and the advertisements are dated February, 1847, or later. I have been told, I admit, that this second "John Chapman" issue sometimes does occur without the errata slip; that, however, may be assumed to

be a mere over-sight—always granting that the slip has not been removed.

(The mention above of the amusing misprint of “mouse” for “moose” recalls some almost equally amusing, but this time intentional, changes of text in the English edition of an American work. When Bryant’s *Poems* were published in England in 1832 it was feared that the scattered lines:—

“The British soldier trembles”—

“Wo to the English soldiery”—

“A moment in the British camp”—

“Till we have driven the Briton”—

—in the poem, “Song of Marion’s Men,” would cause offence, and they were therefore altered to:—

“The foeman trembles in his camp”—

“Wo to the heedless soldiery”—

“A moment in the ravaged camp”—

“Till we have driven the oppressor”.

Things have changed since then: nowadays the ruffling of national susceptibilities helps, rather than hinders, the sale of a book.)

To return to inserted slips, the reverse example, that is to say, of an insert whose presence common-sense shows to be necessary, is found in the quarto pamphlet *Bunker Hill Memorial* (1875), much sought after as the first printing of Holmes's famous poem, "Grandmother's Story of Bunker-Hill Battle." A few—a very few—copies, contain, bound in after the front wrapper, a rather plaintive slip over the publisher's name, reading as follows:

"TO THE PRESS

"We take pleasure in sending to the Press the accompanying 'Bunker Hill Memorial.' The leading feature is the Poem, written expressly for this pamphlet, by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. As the reprinting of it would manifestly injure the sale of the 'Memorial,' we particularly request that it shall not be copied in full. At the same time we are willing that occasional extracts shall be printed."

In this case I know of no direct evidence of priority, but it does not require undue mental strain to conclude that a slip "To the Press," with such a message, is likely to be found only in the earliest copies; and, being bound in and

not tipped in, is an integral, and therefore a necessary, part of the pamphlet. All of which leads me to emphasize that much which appears intricate, or baffling, in these American books can often be solved by a simple process of deduction.



### III

Contemporary names and dates—A “family copy” of Whittier’s *Legends of New-England*—“Issues” and “editions”; need for precise rules; *Hiawatha* and *Miles Standish*—Accepted bibliographical points that do not exist—Three books of great bibliographical complexity (*Kavanagh*; *The Tent on the Beach*; *A Fable for Critics*)—Examples of misnumbered pages.

SOME collectors jib at books with names written on them, but if the name and date are contemporary with the book’s publication they give the volume a certain individuality. And at times they serve purposes of definite use. I have before me two books, Longfellow’s *The Seaside and the Fireside* and Lowell’s *Under the Willows*. According to the title-pages the first was published in 1850 and the second in 1869, but the presentation dates read “December 25, 1849” and “December 25, 1868.” And thus we see that those books, like so many others published towards the end of a year, were post-dated. And that is an interesting piece of bibliographical, or, if you like, biographical, information.

The prejudice against names overlooks an-

other fact which becomes daily more important. When the front end-paper carries, which is so usual, a name and date of long ago, they do serve as a substantial test of the genuineness of the end-paper. I do not say that it is an absolute test, for fakers can think of these things as well as honest men, though the oxidisation of old ink makes it practically impervious to erasing chemicals and its age can be more or less tested. But even disregarding all this, it is obvious that in most cases a written name and date are evidence in the right direction.

And from another point of view, that view which for lack of a better term is called the human point of view, I like those old names in books, those affectionate or formal inscriptions by hands now dust. Who were all these forgotten people? There is something romantic in their very obscurity, for as we know nothing, we can imagine anything. They give one a sense of the continuity of existence; they seem to step bodily out of the past, which with its swift oblivion covers up all but a few famous figures. It is the ordinary man who leaves no trail, who is swallowed in a deep silence, and as one glances

at those faded words, one visualizes, as it were, the unwritten history of a nation.

I have been made particularly conscious of this recently by examining a copy of Whittier's first book, *Legends of New-England* (1831), which I secured not long since. It seems to have belonged to four generations of one family and, from its fine state of preservation, to have been carefully guarded for the better part of a century. Its first owner—in the shaky writing of an old, old man—was “Jno. Jay Phelps”; its second, firmly penned, was “John Jay Phelps, Dundaff, Pa.,” who was surely the eldest son; its third, “Elizabeth Phelps,” perhaps the son's daughter, who has pinned a printed slip into the book with her name upon it and this moral couplet beneath:

“Improve the present hour, for all beside  
Is a mere feather on a torrent's tide”;

while the fourth was Elizabeth's niece, Marion Phelps, to whom the volume came in the angular hand and prim wording of an elderly aunt of that period—“Marion Phelps, Present from her aunt, Elizabeth Phelps, Simsbury, Conn., August

9th, 1890.” (Or perhaps it was the niece herself, one of those conventional young women of 1890, recording the gift.)

But what really fascinated me, what really seemed to roll away the years, was to read the sentences which the first owner had written in pencil on one of the blank pages at the end:

“The season of the singing of birds has come, and the smiling streams are dancing freely and gladly, as erst when the ‘morning stars sang together.’ But times have changed, and other faces than those which smiled on my boyhood now greet my vision. And thus we are passing on. Change after change is passing over those scenes and those places which made my journey of life glad—one after another is passing away to that silent home, where the ‘wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.’ March, 1831.”

What urged him to jot down on this blank leaf these sentiments, at once so typical of the age and so touching in their naïve sincerity? I picture him, a feeble man in his eighties, sitting all alone on the verandah of some New England farmhouse. It is one of those still, clear mornings that come deceptively in March, and he has

# LEGENDS

OR

## NEW-ENGLAND.

——— "The aged crone  
Mixing the true and doubtful into one,  
Tells how the Indian scalped the helpless child  
And bore its shrieking mother to the wild.  
How drums and flags and troops were seen on high  
Wheeling and charging in the northern sky.—  
How by the thunder-blasted tree was hid  
The golden spoils of far famed Robert Kid;  
And then the chubby grand-child wants to know  
About the ghosts and witches long ago."

BRANARD

---

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

---

**Hartford.**

PUBLISHED BY HANMER AND PHELPS.

Sold by Packard & Butler, Hartford; Carter, Hendee & Babcock, Boston;  
G. & C. & H. Carvill, and E. Bliss, New-York; A. E. Carey, and  
A. Hart, Philadelphia; and by the Booksellers generally.

1831.

Title-page of Whittier's *Legends of New-England*.



tottered out into the sun to browse over the book that has just been sent him from Hartford. (It had been published there towards the end of February, and I wonder whether he was, by chance, a retired partner of the firm, Hanmer & Phelps, which produced it?) The title has attracted him—who is this young Whittier who writes of his own New England?—and he has brought a pencil along to make comments on the margins, in the manner of a hundred years ago. It was an era when people relieved their feelings by keeping emotional diaries, by writing verses “On being tenderly affected by the Death of an Infant,” and by scattering in the books they read such vigorous or pious exclamations as “Disgraceful!”, “Perfectly true!”, “What is Man’s puny wisdom in the sight of God!”, or “Is he blind to the Commandments?”

He begins turning the pages, but the warmth makes him drowsy and the book drops into his lap. He sits there in the somnolent quiet of old age, listening dreamily to the birds, allowing his mind to wander over the past. The breath of spring in the air, the stir of the year’s new life, recall vague memories of his own youth, and al-

most insensibly he picks up the book again and starts to write. . . .

Somebody once imagined the history of a guinea piece, but I believe that the history of a book would be just as curious. It sees everything, birth and death, joy and sorrow, the whole cycle of existence. It watches the generations rise and fade, it hears the whispering of lovers in the dusk, the recriminations of bored couples, the choking groans of those about to die. It could, indeed, echo with the ancient bard, "I have seen all things come and all things go under the shadow of the drifting leaf," and yet the only thing it ever does echo, in its watchful stillness, is the thought of another. It is cherished, it is ignored, it remains motionless for years, it starts upon endless travels. And finally, in the fulfillment of its destiny, it gets frozen in a great library or suffers an ignominious decay on the ten-cent shelf. I certainly wish that my *Legends of New-England* could speak: its own story would be so much more enthralling than its contents. . . . But all this has nothing to do with book-collecting, save perhaps to induce some people to look with a kindlier eye upon the books,



and the old signatures in the books, they have collected.

To stress the importance of condition is, after all, to indulge in a truism. But it is this urgent requirement of the modern collector which leads to so much "improving" and is so largely responsible for that wide range of prices which, at first glance, is disconcerting and even incomprehensible. It has been said more than once that no poor copy of a book is cheap and no superb copy dear; and though, like all aphorisms, this requires qualification, it voices an underlying truth. The value of books does, indeed, depend tremendously on their condition, but it is rather bewildering to find, as the present writer recently did, two copies of an American first edition in equally good state—the book was a large paper example of Holmes's *John Lothrop Motley* (1879)—priced in two New York shops of equally good rating at \$35.00 and \$3.50 respectively. A dot's position makes a deal of difference.

The fact is that as there have been no outstanding auction sales of American first editions since the rise in prices began, there is, as it were, no

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

recognized criterion of values. The pendulum swings to and fro. Dealers, themselves, hardly know what to ask; while collectors, feeling all at sea, pick up bargains one day and pay through the nose the next. But the market is bound to get more or less stabilized in time (which does not mean, of course, that prices are bound to remain static), and when that happens we shall get a clearer view of the situation. Then we shall know better whether this "boom" is transitory, as was the one of forty years ago, or whether, as I am inclined to believe, it has come to stay.

And with the stabilizing of the market will have to go a stabilizing of bibliographical description. The terminology now employed must be co-ordinated and made more accurate. This is a formidable task, for our knowledge is relatively slender, there are many cases which no rule seems to cover, and the interpretation of various words may shade into an imperceptible difference. But just as the Royal Geographical Society of London decides on the spelling of Oriental place-names, not according to absolute correctitude (for there is no such thing when translating an Eastern tongue into English), but as a universal

# A WEEK

ON THE

CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.

BY

HENRY D. THOREAU.

BOSTON AND CAMBRIDGE:

JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.

NEW YORK: GEORGE P. PUTNAM. PHILADELPHIA: LINDSAY  
AND BLACKISTON. LONDON: JOHN CHAPMAN.

1849.

William C. Bryant  
with the regard of  
Henry D. Thoreau.

Title-page of Thoreau's *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, with his inscription presenting the book to Bryant.



help to those interested in travel and geography, so must we attempt to lay down bibliographical laws on the same principle.

How hard the task is may be judged if we try to hit upon a definition, acceptable in all cases, of the word "issue" as apart from "edition." In given instances, the difference between the two is, of course, plain: when a book is reset, that is a new edition; when only one leaf or one sheet is reprinted, that is a new issue. But suppose some of the copies are rebound with a fresh title-page, is that a new edition or a new issue? Thoreau's first book, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, is a case in point. It was first published by James Munroe & Co. in 1849 in an edition of 1000 copies. Very few of these were sold and in 1862 the remaining sheets were taken over by the ubiquitous Ticknor & Fields and reissued with another title-page and in another binding. What are we to call this: the second issue of the first edition or simply the second edition? (It is certainly not a "remainder" issue in the accepted meaning of the word.) The former may be more logical but the latter sounds more sensible, and it is amusing

to note that the publishers, as though nonplussed themselves, put "Second Edition" on some of the title-pages and nothing on others. The French solve this kind of difficulty by making purely arbitrary rules: in order to give the impression of enormous sales they are in the habit of stamping a different edition number on, say, every thousand copies of a popular work, although ten thousand or more may have constituted the first printing.

But American publishers of the Nineteenth Century, whose sophistication was developed in other directions, far from resorting to that device, more often than not failed even to put "Second Edition" on the title-page when their books were reprinted. Perhaps they argued that such reprints, made without, or with but small, alteration from standing type or stereo plates, were not strictly second editions—words which they may have deemed to apply only when a book had been reset—but, if so, they argued wrongly. For it is obvious that a second edition has nothing of necessity to do with the question of change, but merely with the question of priority. If 500 copies of a book represent its first

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

printing, those 500 copies alone are entitled to rank as the first edition, though 50,000 copies, unaltered in the slightest degree, may subsequently be circulated.

Of course, it is a counsel of perfection to expect us to spot the unspottable—incidentally, it is the main justification for the “broken comma” school of bibliography—but the point is emphasized in order to demonstrate how frequently unjustifiable is our dogmatism about editions and issues. Even if we could scientifically define the two words, we would still be faced by an inherent uncertainty.

For practical purposes, therefore, we have got to be more or less arbitrary and endeavor to inculcate general rules that will be acceptable to everybody in those cases where the actual facts cannot be ascertained. The most obvious rule would appear to be this: that a fresh date on the title-page should stand for a new edition, while changes in the text alone, assuming the whole book has not been reset, should stand for a new issue.

Such a rule would seem to offer a rough and ready justice, but it could only be applied elas-

tically. Within its scope there must be room for every proven exception, and at its best it can be no better than tentative. There are works, such as Lowell's *Among My Books. Second Series* (1876), where a few copies are known to exist with an earlier date on the reverse of the title, and such copies may properly be called the first issue. Where the internal evidence is strong enough any arbitrary rule can be over-ridden; common-sense must be the final factor.

But let us see how our rule would function in cases where we happen to possess definite facts as to the number of printings. We will consider two of Longfellow's most celebrated poems, *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855) and *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858). Of *Hiawatha* four issues (or editions), numbering 11,000 copies in all, were published in 1855 and so dated; and of the *Courtship* three issues (or editions), running to 25,000 copies, were put forth within a week of the book's publication in October, 1858, and were dated 1858. Longfellow, in his journal and account-books, and correspondence and conversations with his publishers, called them all editions; the publishers, less interested in the



THE  
SONG OF HIAWATHA.

BY  
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

BOSTON:  
TICKNOR AND FIELDS.  
MDCCC LV.

THE  
COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH.

AND  
OTHER POEMS.

BY  
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

BOSTON:  
TICKNOR AND FIELDS.  
MDCCC LVIII

Title-pages of Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*.



problem, print in 1855 and 1858 successive title-pages that are exactly alike and contain no indication of successive issues or editions.

But let us examine *Hiarwatha* more closely. It is commonly stated that the single variation in text between the first and second issues (or editions) is that on line 7 of page 96 "dove" is altered to "dived." This statement has two defects. In the first place, it forgets the third and fourth—let us call them printings; and in the second place it ignores many other textual differences, seven of which, on pages 39, 268 and in the glossary, consist in the change of the Indian cry of lamentation "Wahonomin" to "Wahonowin." Line 11 of page 32 in the first form reads "In the Moon when nights are brightest," and in the second form, "To the melancholy north-land"; and at line 17 of page 278 the line "Cooed the Omemee, the pigeon" becomes "Cooed the pigeon, the Omeme"—this misprint being corrected to "Omemee" by 1856.

So much for the second state. (It will be observed that "dove" is apparently always an accurate enough catch-word.) The third state differs from the second only that at line 9 of page

27 the "cormorant and heron" become "cormorant and curlew." Whether or not there is any fourth state, and if so what differences it contains, is as yet unknown. All this, as mentioned above, is in 1855.

In *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, on the other hand, all copies dated 1859 read "ruddy" at line 3 of page 124, and all examined copies dated 1858 read "treacherous." I express myself thus guardedly, because one is frequently told of 1858 copies reading "ruddy," which, on being searched for, have never become visible. I shall doubt the existence of such a book until some one places it in my hands, but in the face of so many statements, even though unproved, I cannot deny that it may exist.

Applying our rule, therefore, we would call the revised *Hiawatha* a second or third issue, as the case may be; and would call the revised *Miles Standish* of 1859 a second edition. And this would seem to be about right, for it is a reasonable supposition that the need for corrections caught Longfellow's eye at once and that the first changes in *Hiawatha* were made immediately. (But note that the surviving page proofs, in

first issue form, though containing all the corrections I have referred to, also contain about 40 others, which are not made even as late as 1856.) And, in the same way, when apparently Longfellow, so far as is known, saw no need of any correction in *Miles Standish* until 1859, after 25,000 or more copies had been published, it seems logical enough to call these 1859 copies second editions, reserving the phrase "second issue" for the 1858 "ruddy" copies, if and when they appear. Surely if these 1859 printings are not a second edition (applying our arbitrary terminology), they are at least of a considerably later *issue* than the second.

Another and clearer example of a work usually catalogued by "issues" which should be described by "editions" is Lowell's translation of Professor Child's operatic skit, *Il Pesceballo*, which appeared in three forms in 1862. In the first of these forms, without date or wrappers—apparently a trial attempt—it contains four signatures; not half a dozen copies have survived. The second form, also without date, wrappers or imprint, in two signatures and with innumerable differences in typesetting, correc-

tion of misprints, etc., was distributed only to the distinguished audience which first heard it sung at the home of Miss Parsons in Garden Street, Cambridge, on May 6, 1862. In the third form, now with dated wrappers, it was issued to the public over a Riverside Press imprint later in the same year, with still further resetting and correction of misprints. Surely, if technical terms are to mean anything, and if we are to have any rule of nomenclature, three different complete resettings, no matter how close in time, are editions and not issues.

The general rule I have suggested is admittedly full of loopholes; but the very uncertainty of our knowledge makes it desirable to have such a rule in order to do away with chaos. As matters now stand every one is a law to himself. The same book is constantly described in different terms, and collectors do not know what to think. This breeds suspicion of all statements and is bad for the whole trade. Therefore, in order to achieve a certain feeling of security, it is essential that there should be a codified bibliographical description, even if it be in the nature of a makeshift. An interesting plea

to the same effect, citing the more usual examples, may be found in an article by Mr. George H. Sargent entitled "Firsts, Issues and Points" in part one of *The Colophon* (1930).

(Although I have confined the discussion to "edition" and "issue," and, indeed, seldom use other terms throughout these pages, yet I admit that there are occasions on which we could achieve a clearer accuracy of expression by subdividing further into "state." The word "issue" seems too important and, as it were, too definite, to describe a trivial error, corrected early from standing type; and one can even imagine a book that could properly be designated as "the first state of the first issue of the first edition." But as we seldom know enough to justify a complete nicety of wording, I have thought it wisest to keep the problem as simple as possible and to treat "state" and "issue" as one and the same. Actually, they may not always be identical—but who is to be the arbiter? Unless we are sure of our facts, we are liable to complicate matters by multiplying terms.)

And it is desirable, also, that books should be described with a due sense of proportion. Once

a bibliographical point gets recognized it achieves, whether right or wrong, whether important or unimportant, that kind of notoriety which the unusual always invites. Books without points are like women without beauty—they pass unnoticed in the crowd. But books with points excite immediate interest and everybody, so to speak, turns to gaze at them. And therefore there is an instinctive tendency to dwell on points, to exaggerate their significance, and even to discover points that are not really points at all.

I am not at the moment referring to actual mistakes, though any student of catalogues expects to find them full of errors. I am referring to that type of comment which, while perfectly accurate, misleads by inference. The standard instance of this is the invariable note to Thoreau's *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849):—"Lacks the three lines at the foot of page 396." Such a sentence could only suggest that some copies, presumably second issues, do not lack those lines. In truth, however, as is well-known, after Thoreau's death the unsold sheets were re-issued with an 1862 title-page, and the



## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

three lines are just as much absent from the 1862 copies, as they are from every copy of the first edition of 1849.

Again, the date on advertisements is constantly emphasized even in regard to those books in which the advertisement date is invariably the same. Who, for instance, ever saw a copy of Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855), in which the 12 pages of advertisements at the end were not dated November, 1855? Nobody: they always are dated like that. In this respect, it is interesting to note that the first English edition of *Hiawatha*, issued in the same year as the first American edition and printing the text in its earliest form, has Bogue's "Annual Catalogue" at the end, dated March, 1855. It is very unlikely that this means that the book was published in England prior to its publication in America; the probability is that it represents only one more example of how unreliable is the evidence from advertisement dates. The obvious explanation is that Bogue, the English publisher of the poem, was using up his yearly catalogue. It is only in the cloth copies that the advertisements occur; in wrappers the book is without any and is labelled

“Author’s Protective Edition.” With heaps of books, indeed, the advertisement dates are no test, and attention should only be drawn markedly to advertisements where they appear with more than one date.

To make a bibliographical song and dance over an error or a point that persists right through an edition is meaningless. Of course, the cataloguer who starts the original hare—for most cataloguers just copy from other cataloguers—is entitled to argue that, since an error would probably be discovered early, there is a likelihood of its having been corrected early. But unless he knows that this was actually done he should remain quiet or qualify his remarks. Yet I fear that his optimism often outruns his knowledge and that hope, rather than necessity, is at times the mother of his invention.

Who, for example, has ever seen a copy of Holmes’s *Poems* (1836) with the label reading “Poems by O. W. Holmes” and not “Holmes’s Poems”? It is true that Holmes wrote a letter to the publishers objecting to the euphemy and requesting that the label be so changed, but that apparently is where the matter ended. And who

has ever seen a copy of Emerson's *Essays: Second Series* (1844) in which the numbering of the pages does not jump from 256 to 259? And who has ever seen a copy of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855) that did not contain the misprint "abode" for "adobe" on line 20 of page 23? I am out to be converted, for I admit that they *may* exist. But I also know that on the dark side of the moon there *may* be an exact replica of the White House. Nobody can prove that there is not, but I remain profoundly sceptical—which does not mean that if somebody can show me to be wrong I shall not immediately retract what I have said.

Naturally, one can examine relatively few copies of any book, and naturally dealers in first editions stock, as a rule, only the correct issues; but I am inclined to doubt the very existence of some second issues and I suspect that, if they do exist, they are far rarer than the first. For example, I have never yet seen a copy of Lowell's *Poems: Second Series* (1848) that did not have the misprint "booming," instead of "glooming," in the first line of the second verse of page 34; or a copy of Whittier's *Leaves from Margaret*

*Smith's Journal* (1849) which did not contain "he" for "her" on line 6 of page 173 and on line 7 of page 222 (even in copies so late that the advertisements are dated December, 1854, instead of January 1, 1849, as in the first issue, the double error is present); or a copy of the same author's *Old Portraits and Modern Sketches* (1850) that did have "End" on the final page; or a copy of Thoreau's *The Maine Woods* (1864) that did not have the list of his works facing the title-page priced; or a copy of Emerson's *May-Day* (1867) that did not have "flowers," instead of the "hours" of the later editions, on line 4 of page 184; or a copy of Longfellow's *Aftermath* (1873) that did not print "little cared" both in lines 11 and 13 on page 54 (the English edition of the same year occurs both with, and without, the change to "or" in line 13); or a copy of Lowell's *Three Memorial Poems* (1877) that did not have the misprint "acknowledgment" on the dedication page. This is no proof that there are not such copies, but it does suggest that they are uncommon, to say the least, and that the cataloguer of what, within my limited experience,

are the only forms, is under no pressing obligation to crow.

Even in those cases where we do know that there are several different issues of the first edition, it is not always true that the earliest issue is the rarest. For example, of the first four issues of Longfellow's *Kavanagh* (1849) Livingston states that the fourth is the scarcest, and the third the commonest; while of the four issues of the first edition of Whittier's *The Tent on the Beach* (1867), the second and fourth seem to be much scarcer than the first and third. The collector will make the reasonable response that, despite such information, he is interested only in the very earliest issue of all. True enough: but as far as these two books are concerned he ought to possess every issue, as there are differences of text in each one of them.

The bibliography of *Kavanagh* and of *The Tent on the Beach* is, indeed, very singular, and it seems a pity that book-dealers do not make up sets of the issues instead of concentrating on what they believe, with a fair margin of error, to be the earliest. For just as certain primitive

marine animals that live on one central stem form together a complete entity, so might it be argued that the different issues of these two books are necessary for the forming of complete works. But even if one does not choose to argue like this, it is obvious that a comparison of the various issues helps one to follow intelligently the author's changes.

Take *Kavanagh*. The only textual difference between the first and the second issue is that, in the first, the last line of page 173 reads "older than when they left. At the sight of him," and in the second, "older than when they left him there. To Cecilia." The only textual differences between the second and the third issues are that "now only" on line 6 of page 180 of the second issue is replaced by "less than" in the third, and that "End" is added to the last page. The only textual differences between the third and fourth issues are that "Cartwright" on line 12 of page 25 is changed to "Wainwright," "Arian" on line 14 of page 96 to "Arius," and "yellow" on line 2 of page 132 to "golden."

Even if the late Mr. Livingston, in his capital bibliography of Longfellow (compiled largely

from Chamberlain's collection and notes), had not set out the four issues in their proper order, it could readily have been arrived at by anybody who had the volumes in front of him, because each of them incorporates all the changes of the preceding issue while showing alterations of its own. And thus the possessor of all four issues gets a satisfactory view of what really did happen.

Livingston, however, also states that in the fourth issue the misprint "wondl" on line 11—not 2 as he says—of page 172 is corrected to "would." I have never seen such a copy, and, since this misprint occurs in the eighth edition of the work, dated 1856, I am very dubious of its existence.

Furthermore, he does not note the fact that there is a "sport" issue (not an uncommon book) which has all the points of a first issue, save only in regard to the last signature, which contains all the points of a third. This must have been caused by the sheets of two issues getting mixed, and it is quite probable that there are other combinations, making other "sport" issues. Every collector should make a practice of checking through every copy of the 1849 *Kavanagh* which

he comes across. The collector, also, who has secured the true first issue of this book, may take added pleasure from the fact that even Longfellow himself was not amply supplied with these earliest copies. The book was published on May 12, 1849. The copy which he gave Hawthorne, with an inscription dated May 19, is the first issue; but the copy given to Emerson, also dated May 19, is the "sport" issue; and the copies given his sister and father, not dated at all, are the second issue. Copies presented to ordinary people, dated merely May, 1849, are usually the second issue, although at least one such first issue copy is known with this indeterminate date. (If we ask how the "sport" issue could appear so early, the answer is that, as the first edition consisted of 5000 copies, corrections were evidently made while it was passing through the press.) And the lover of "properly-dated" advertisements will derive bleak comfort from the fact that all the dated presentation copies of *Kavanagh* examined have no advertisements at all—save only the one which he gave to Mrs. Longfellow, a pre-publication first issue dated May 10, 1849.



With quick heart-glow, as one might meet,  
Upon a pathway chill and stern,  
Sunshine and bird-songs, and the sweet  
Warm breath of brier-rose and fern,  
The reader heard the grateful praise;  
A half-incredulous amaze  
Tempering the gladness which his looks confessed,  
And stammering in the thanks his words but half  
expressed.

"In sight and sound, our rugged coast  
Shall tell of him from year to year,  
Nor lightly shall the lays be lost  
That homely firesides love to hear.  
For still on truth's and nature's tests  
The common heart its verdict rests;  
By simple instinct guided in its choice,  
It loves the song that lends its own experience voice."

"Thanks for the fitting word he speaks,  
Nor less for doubtful word unspoken;  
For the false model that he breaks,  
As for the moulded grace unbroken;  
For what is missed and what remains,  
For losses which are truest gains,  
For reverence 'conscious of th' Eternal eye,  
And truth too fair to need the garnish of a lie."

The second stanza on page 46 of the four issues of Whittier's *The Tent on the Beach*. Above, 1st issue; center, 2d and 3d issues; below, 4th issue. The difference between the 2d and 3d issues is explained in the text.



The bibliographical history of *The Tent on the Beach* is equally curious. The late Mr. Chamberlain, a tireless comparer of texts, stated that there were four issues of the first edition of 1867; but he neglected to tell us the distinguishing features of any except the first. It has resulted that a first and second issue have invariably been differentiated in catalogues by a reference to the first line of the second stanza on page 46. Unfortunately, there are three, neither two nor four, of these differing lines. And what has become of Chamberlain's fourth issue? Many people had come to doubt that such a fourth issue ever existed: but, as usual, Mr. Chamberlain knew what he was talking about.

The explanation is this: there *were* four issues in 1867. All copies in which the test line on page 46 reads "With quick heart-glow, as one might meet" are first issues; so far as is known, all presentation copies are of this form. The second form of the test line, "In sight and sound, our rugged coast," may be either the second or third issue. In the second issue (as in the first) the last two lines on page 42 read:

“Our part is simple trust and reverent awe,  
For who hath known His mind, or been His  
counsellor?”

—while in the third issue (as in the fourth) these lines read:

“Unscaled, unpierced the cloudy walls remain,  
We beat with dream and wish the soundless  
doors in vain.”

In the fourth issue—hitherto known, but much neglected—the test line on page 46 changes again to “Thanks for the fitting word he speaks.” Now the first and third issues are common books, but the second, perhaps just because it was a transitional product, seems elusive. The fourth issue, also, is seldom seen. Whether it be actually rare or merely relegated to more lowly haunts as not containing either of the well-known lines on page 46, I have no means of knowing. But it—and all the issues—most certainly ought to be collected, since the text varies considerably throughout, even to further changes of whole lines. After the fourth issue there were no further changes made until Whittier’s revision for his final collected edition.

A curious book, both as regards make-up and

changes in text, is Lowell's anonymous skit, *A Fable for Critics* (1848). Every collector is aware that the first edition has a half-title and lacks the line "A Vocal and Musical Medley" from the rhymed title-page; many collectors are aware that on line 10 of page 25 there is the misprint "Cotilion" for "Cotillion," and on line 21 of page 41 the misprint "Goliah" for "Goliath"; but relatively few collectors are aware that in the second edition there are, in all, about forty corrections and alterations in the text. In a case like this, where knowledge of a few points is a sufficient guide to an issue, it invariably happens that ninety-nine people out of a hundred have only heard of these points. That is the price we have to pay for the commercialization of bibliography. Brevity ceases to be admirable when it is a mere cloak to ignorance.

Livingston estimates, in his bibliography of Lowell, that *A Fable for Critics* was printed four times in 1848. He thought either that these were all different editions or, apparently, that the second edition ran into three issues. But modern research has amplified his theories. That there were two issues of the first edition is made

evident from the fact that a few copies, a very few, have the numeral 63 repeated on the headline of page 64, while again at least one copy has been found where page 64 is correctly numbered, but page 63 is misnumbered 64. And there were certainly four different issues (if issues they are and not separate printings, which is rather suggested by their make-up and the numbering of their signatures) of the second edition. The first of these has no preliminary note or advertisements; the second has the preliminary note tipped in; the third has the preliminary note bound in and has also advertisements at the end; while the fourth has the Broadway address of the title-page changed to "Park Place," which, incidentally, vitiates the rhyme of the carefully composed title-page. All of them, of course, are still dated 1848. But it is a muddling book and may yet have some bibliographical secrets up its sleeve.

Let us stop, however, and consider for a moment if common-sense cannot help us to unravel this double misnumbering of the first edition. The 6th signature of the book ends at page 64, the 7th beginning at page 65. Is it not natu-

READER! walk up at once (it will soon be too late) and buy  
at a perfectly ruinous rate

# FABLE FOR CRITICS;

OR

*Better—*

*I like, as a thing that the reader's first fancy may strike,  
an old fashioned title-page,  
such as presents a tabular view of the volume's contents—*

A GLANCE  
AT A FEW OF OUR LITERARY PROGENIES

(Mrs. Malaprop's word)

FROM

THE TUB OF DIOGENES;

*A vocal & musical melody,*

THAT IS,

A SERIES OF JOKES

*By a Wonderful Guff,*

*who accompanies himself with a rub-a-dub-dub, full of spirit and grace,  
on the top of the tub.*

SET FORTH IN

October, the 21st day, in the year 18.

G. P. PUTNAM, BROADWAY.

*T. W. Higginson,*

*inerte auctoris primum.*

*Nov. 1845.*

Title-page, and presentation inscription, of the copy of  
*A Fable for Critics* presented by Lowell to Higginson,  
with two corrections by Lowell.





ral to suppose that, as the first printed sheets were folded for binding and the folded 7th signature was about to be stacked for the binder on the top of the folded 6th, some sharp eye caught the fact that the page on the top of the pile, which ought to be 64, was wrongly printed 63? And that a hasty order was given to correct 63 to 64? And that the blundering mechanic who executed the order changed *both* 63s to 64s, with the result that page 63 was now mis-paged, so that a second correction had to be made?

I can see no other plausible answer to this jumble, and it is confirmed by the copy which Lowell presented to T. W. Higginson—a gift whose value was not enhanced by Lowell's shipping that frailest of frail vessels through the mail *without wrapping it*—merely writing Higginson's name and address on the back cover! One wonders that it arrived at all. But arrive it did, containing Lowell's correction of 14 errors in the text, including neither "Goliah" nor "cotilion," *and* with page 64 misnumbered 63. Curiously enough, neither Chamberlain nor Wakeman, both of whom owned this Higginson copy, ever noticed the error in pagination—which

is further proof of my belief that we are only on the threshold of discoveries concerning American books. Until further evidence appears, it would seem that theory and evidence unite in justifying me in tentatively calling these "63" copies the true first issue of *A Fable for Critics*.

The reference above to a few copies of *A Fable for Critics* with misnumbered pages reminds me that similar mistakes in pagination occur in early copies of other American books. For example, some copies of Emerson's *Nature* (1836) have page 92 printed twice, the second time in place of page 94; and some copies of Whittier's *Legends of New-England* (1831) have page iv of the preliminary matter printed as v. In these same early copies of the *Legends* there is a misprint in the text: on the last line but one of page 98 "the go" is printed instead of "they go." Other copies, rather less early, have the "iv" correct, but retain the misprint "the."

Indeed, where a book contains several errors, it is no unusual thing to find several issues, each working towards a correct text. Take the case of Longfellow's *Ballads and Other Poems* (1842). The first issue has uncalled-for quota-

tion marks at the end of line 1 of page 34 and a small "t" in "teacher" on the last line of page 88. The second has the quotation marks still, but the "T" is a capital letter. The third keeps the capital "T" and omits the quotation marks.

All the errors described above in these different books were duly detected and, since the books were printed from type, easily corrected. Copies containing them rank as the earliest issues, or, if you choose, states, which here is probably a more correct term. Now, on the law of averages, it seems probable that other books of that period must also show errors in pagination and text. Whoever ferrets them out will be a real discoverer. What is a broken comma or a missing letter compared to a wrong numeral or a misspelled word?

## IV

Lack of logic in certain instances in preference for: single imprints, boards, wrappers, etc.—Mistakes of cataloguers (*The Masque of Pandora*, *Mogg Megone*)—Value of internal evidence—Alleged fourth edition of Whittier's *Voices of Freedom* explained—Puzzles of Cooper's *Lionel Lincoln* and *Deerslayer* and of some other books—Why certain works are common or rare—A sheer mistake—Misleading circumstantial evidence—Old letters as a guide—Some unsolved riddles of American bibliography.

BOOK-COLLECTING may not be a logical pursuit in itself, but, if we collect books, we should go logically about it. (That is a good resonant sentence, at any rate.) But it cannot be said that we always do. The bibliophile who is searching for Holmes's *Poems* (1836), or for his *The Professor at the Breakfast-Table* (1860), or for Lowell's *The Biglow Papers* (1848) is not truly content unless he can secure them with the title-pages carrying but one single place of publication—Boston for the first two, Cambridge for the third. He scorns the copies which carry also the names of New York on the first and third, and of Philadelphia on the second. (Sometimes the imprint of Cincinnati appears in the *Pro-*

fessor, and possibly other copies show other towns.) But that is rather illogical. The books were printed in New England, but before publication many copies with the double imprint were sent to New York or Philadelphia in order that they might be distributed from these centers by other publishers throughout the South and Middle West. Now, the books having been issued simultaneously all over the country, it stands to reason that those copies with the double imprint were the first to be sent out to the book-shops. Consequently, they are the ones that should appeal most strongly to the sentiment of the collector. At least one might suppose so. But fashion says otherwise.

Fashion, indeed, plays its usual part in helping to defeat common-sense. Longfellow's *Hyperion* (2 vols., 1839) is far rarer in cloth than in boards with paper labels, but there is a passion for volumes in boards—partly because they do so look “the real right thing” and partly because it is so difficult to find them in decent state—and it is in boards that the collector wants them.

And if the edition of a book in boards is auto-

matically preferred to that in cloth, it is equally true, and for similar reasons, that an edition in wrappers is automatically preferred to one in a more permanent binding. And yet the preference may not be bibliographically justified. For example, Hawthorne's *Life of Franklin Pierce* (1852), written to oblige his old college friend in his presidency campaign, was published in cloth (either brown or black and with differing figuration) in September, whereas the edition in wrappers, which is worth several times as much, was not published till after October 2, as we know from a letter of Hawthorne to Ticknor of that date. The reason, no doubt, was that the cloth edition was found to be too expensive for wide distribution among the electorate.

Again, it seems more than probable that only a proportion of the copies of the first edition of Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851) were bound up with orange-colored end-papers, but a Melville enthusiast would have a fainting fit if one hinted that those with plain end-papers were not to be despised. They are probably not the earliest copies, I admit, since the supply of colored end-papers presumably gave out before the edition

## NOTE.

In the year 1843 I shipped as "ordinary seaman" on board of a United States frigate, then lying in a harbor of the Pacific Ocean. After remaining in this frigate for more than a year, I was discharged from the service upon the vessel's arrival home. My year of war experiences and observations are incorporated in the present volume.

New York, March, 1845.

Some of the incidents & characters described in this book occurred on board the Frigate "United States" - in which I returned home via Cape Horn in 1844. Other incidents described are either purely imaginary, or happened at some other time & place. The author probably has made his book not from personal experience wholly, but has patched together scraps picked up from some other persons' journals, or conversation - Most of the characters & incidents described are grossly caricatured, or exaggerated.

A preliminary leaf of Melville's *White-Jacket*, with pencilled comment on the book by a ship-mate of Melville's on the voyage.

"Some of the incidents and characters described in this book occurred on board the Frigate 'United States'—in which I returned home via Cape Horn in 1844. Other incidents described are either purely imaginary, or happened at some other time or place. The author probably has made his book, not from personal experiences wholly, but has patched together scraps picked up from some other person's journal or conversation—most of the characters & incidents described are grossly caricatured, or exaggerated. H. R."





was finished; but all the same those copies that have plain end-papers are copies of the first edition. (I may mention here that the same thing happened with other books by Melville: such works as *Omoo* (1847), *Mardi* (2 vols., 1849) and *White-Jacket* (1850) can be found either with fancy or with plain end-papers—and, no doubt, the plain ones are invariably later.)

*Moby-Dick* is one of those books which fashion has made more valuable than statistics warrant. There are several works by Melville, such as *Pierre* (1852) and *The Confidence Man* (1857), which are actually rarer than *Moby-Dick*, but then they are not wanted so much and they cost a great deal less. This novel, like Cooper's *The Deerslayer* (2 vols., 1841), Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (2 vols., 1852), is relatively common but increasingly expensive, because it is a corner-stone book and the supply is never up to the demand. In books, as in clothes, fashion is exceedingly infectious.

Expressions of opinion, being useful levers, are too often allowed to pass without challenge by subsequent collectors and cataloguers. For

instance, because Mr. Wakeman left in his leather-bound copy of Whittier's *Poems* (1838) a note saying, "This book in original stamped morocco, gilt edges, is very rare. I have never seen another copy," it has been assumed ever since, and loudly proclaimed, that such is the case. But such is *not* the case. The book is not at all rare in that morocco binding, and it is by mere chance that a dozen copies did not come into Mr. Wakeman's hands.

Then again, certain books when catalogued are always accompanied by tentative but optimistic statements about them which, lacking verification, should be regarded with suspicion. I think, however, that the invariable comment on Poe's *Eureka* (1848)—"It is believed that only 500 copies of this book were printed"—is correct, though I do not know the original source of information. Mr. Hervey Allen, in his admirably comprehensive *Israfel, The Life and Times of Edgar Allan Poe* (2 vols., 1926), states definitely that Poe's enthusiastic scheme for an edition of 50,000 was reduced by the cautious publisher to one of 500—a proper caution, too, since

I am sure that even now there are not 500 people who have a clear notion what it is all about.

A more curious case is that of Longfellow's *The Masque of Pandora* (1875). The original intention was to publish this book in 1876, and the copyright notice on the back of the title-page was thus dated—probably by accident. But the time was altered to October, 1875, and then the copyright date was also altered. This may be seen by examining the numerals. The “5” is in a smaller type than the “187” and is slightly out of alignment. Whether the date on the title-page was then altered, too, or was always 1875, is hard to say: the type is the same throughout, though the “5” does seem to be a little out of alignment.

The assumption is, therefore, that if one could find a copy with “1876” both on the title-page and on the copyright notice, that would be the earliest issue. But no such copy has ever been found, though there are plenty with “1876” on the title-page alone, because two subsequent editions (or issues) were published in that year. But Mr. Wakeman found one with an 1876

title-page and an inscription from Longfellow dated November 13, 1875. This combination persuaded him that he was in the presence of the earliest issue.

But let us consider the other evidence. In all known copies dated 1875 on the title-page there occurs a misprint which is corrected in all known copies dated 1876: the last line but one on the first page of the contents reads "Candenabria" in the 1875 edition, and "Candenabbia" in both editions of 1876. (Longfellow's own copy, dated 1875 both on the title-page and in his hand, has the correction made by him in pencil.) This, in itself, is sufficient to establish the priority of the 1875 edition. As to which of the 1876 editions came first, that is established by the fact that another mistake—"wardens" for "warders" on line 9 of page 45—appears both in the 1875 edition and in one of the 1876 editions, but is finally corrected (the reading was never afterwards changed) in the other 1876 edition. Between these three editions there are, indeed, a variety of differences, but the two textual alterations fix the order of them once and for all.

Unfortunately, the presentation copy men-

tioned by Mr. Wakeman has disappeared, but it is not hard to make various reasonable assumptions with regard to it. *The Masque of Pandora* was published about October 24th, as is clearly shown from one of Longfellow's letters, and it is quite possible that by the middle of November the earlier of the 1876 editions was on the market; certainly a copy of the later of the 1876 editions exists with the date of Christmas, 1875, on the fly-leaf. Longfellow's popularity was such that the printers were kept busy, and the fact that the first of the 1876 editions is full of poor presswork, while the second is well produced, would point to a job that had had to be rushed.

Or, maybe, the date, November 13th, had some valued memory attached to it, for Mr. Wakeman found another Longfellow presentation copy of the book, this time with an 1875 title-page, dated November 13, 1875. If that were so, sentiment may have caused the poet to place that particular date on a book presented later. Nobody can tell precisely what happened, and it is always conceivable that there are "freak" copies of the first issue dated 1876; but what is certain is that the ordinary copies dated 1876, which are being

constantly claimed as first issues, are nothing of the sort.

One error, which arose simply through the misreading of a sentence, has persisted for many years. In his *Life of Whittier* (2 vols., 1894) Pickard says on page 104: "Mr. Whittier was more successful in suppressing *Moll Pitcher* than he was with his later poem, *Mogg Megone*. It has never been published in any collection of his works, and as a whole does not deserve to be perpetuated." Now it is obvious that the "It" refers to *Moll Pitcher* (1832), but for some extraordinary reason cataloguers have assumed that it refers to *Mogg Megone* (1836) and have diligently repeated the fiction that this poem has never been reprinted. Rather an obtuse fiction, too, considering that it appears in every one of his collected editions, including the first two, those of 1849 and 1857. In both of them it is the second poem in the collection—not a particularly studied suppression.

Indeed, Pickard's statement that Whittier tried to suppress the first edition scarcely holds water, unless we assume that the poet began with such an idea and then changed his mind. Why



## A DIRGE.

Poor! lonely is thy bed,  
 And the turf is overhead, —  
 Cold earth is thy cover;  
 But thy heart hath found release,  
 And it slumbers full of peace  
 'Neath the rustle of green trees,  
 And the warm hum of the bees  
 Mid the drowsy clover;  
 Through thy chamber still as death  
 A smooth gurgle wandereth,  
 As the blue stream murmureth  
 To the blue sky over.

## A DIRGE.

Poor! lonely is thy bed,  
 And the turf is overhead, —  
 Cold earth is thy cover;  
 But thy heart hath found release,  
 And it slumbers full of peace  
 'Neath the rustle of green trees,  
 And the warm hum of the bees  
 Mid the drowsy clover;  
 Through thy chamber still as death  
 A smooth gurgle wandereth,  
 As the blue stream murmureth  
 To the blue sky over.

The correct use of the term "large paper"—ordinary and large paper copies of Lowell's *Poems* (1844) opened at the poem "A Dirge."



From fathomless depths of the sky  
The voice of his prophecy  
Sounding louder and more near!

Malediction! malediction!  
May the lightnings of heaven fall  
On palace and prison wall  
And their desolation be  
As the day of fear and affliction,  
As the day of anguish and fire,  
With the burning and fuel of fire,  
In the Valley of the Sea!

*Under the Walls of Macharus* 61

And the eyes of the homicide,  
More pitiless than they,  
As thou didst bury of yore  
The body of him that died  
On the mountain of Peor!

Even now I behold a sign,  
A threatening of wrath divine,  
A watery, wandering star,  
Through whose streaming hair, and the white  
Unfolding garments of light,  
That trail behind it afar,  
The constellations shine!  
And the whiteness and brightness appear  
Like the Angel bearing the Seer  
By the hair of his head, in the might  
And rush of his vehement flight.  
And I listen until I hear  
From fathomless depths of the sky  
The voice of his prophecy  
Sounding louder and more near!

Malediction! malediction!  
May the lightnings of heaven fall  
On palace and prison wall,  
And their desolation be  
As the day of fear and affliction,  
As the day of anguish and fire,  
With the burning and fuel of fire,  
In the Valley of the Sea!

The incorrect use of the term "large paper"—ordinary and "large paper" copies of Longfellow's *The Divine Tragedy*, opened at the conclusion of Part III of "The Second Passover."



suppress a volume you think worth while reprinting? And *Mogg Megone*, though a scarce little book, turns up with regularity, whereas *Moll Pitcher* is so excessively rare that when it does make an appearance it causes quite a sensation. Indeed, most *Moll Pitchers* are either the reprint or *Moll Pitcher, and the Minstrel Girl* (1840), which itself is a pearl of considerable price.

Some books luckily carry within themselves the refutation of commonly accepted errors in regard to them. Here is an instance: Longfellow's *The Divine Tragedy* (1871) was set up simultaneously as an 8vo volume and as a 12mo volume, and the two are quite unrelated bibliographically. The first contains 313 pages of text and the second only 150. But the 8vo is always alluded to as a "large paper" edition, whereas it is nothing of the sort. It is a large sized edition, yes; but "large paper" has a technical meaning. Only a book printed from the type of the ordinary edition upon paper with broad margins, is a large paper copy. Examples may be found in the special edition of Lowell's *Poems* (1844), of which about half a dozen copies are known, in Holmes's *The Professor at the Break-*

*fast-Table* (1860), distinctly uncommon on large paper, and in Irving's *A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* (2 vols., 1829), which is even rarer than the Lowell volume in this form—at least, it is more seldom offered for sale, by dealer or auction-room. (And I may add here that I should not be at all surprised, in view of the companion nature of the books and the fact that they issued from the same publisher, if some day Irving's *The Alhambra* (2 vols., 1832) should not appear similarly aggrandized.) If we are going to use technical language, then let us use it accurately. For its whole value lies in its precision.

Whittier's anonymous anti-slavery tract, *Narrative of James Williams* (1838), has puzzled bibliographers no end, if one may judge from the different issues and editions which are claimed as the first. But when it is asserted, as it often is, that the pamphlet form is the earliest of all, then really there is no excuse. For at the foot of the first page of the pamphlet we may read these words: "The Narrative can be had at the Depository of the American Anti-Slavery Society . . . in a neat

volume, 108 pp. 12 mo.” That is plain enough evidence that the book was already in print when the pamphlet was issued, and when one has the book before one and sees that it *is* a small volume of 108 pages—our ideas of “neat” have altered since 1838—the case for its priority is complete. (Though rather out of place here as having nothing to do with the argument, it may be mentioned that the first issue of the first edition of the *Narrative* does not have, as the second issue does, the printer’s name, J. F. Trow, Pr., on the reverse of the title-page, but (where the copies are in boards) on the cover, that it has a comma, instead of a period, after “Williams” on the title-page, and that the word “barbarity” on line 1 of page xv is misspelled “barbarrity.” (The two issues appear either in cloth or in boards.) This pamphlet is a comparatively recent discovery, although the possibility of its existence—and its definitely late date—were pointed out, with considerable prophetic instinct, by Mr. P. K. Foley over thirty years ago. In a letter to “The Nation” of April 29, 1897, he shows that the book, *Narrative of James Williams*, was advertised in

the New York anti-slavery organ on Feb. 18, 1838, while it was not until May 3 that it was announced "in sheets \$1.00 per hundred in any quantity" (this being even later than the Boston issue of March 30), and suggests that the existence of these May sheets presages the discovery of a late pamphlet form of about the same date. The fact of such valuable buried information as the above throws into relief the great need of a complete bibliography of Whittier; and one may express the hope, on behalf of all collectors, that the competent hands which have been collecting material for it during some twenty years may be permitted to find leisure for finishing it.

Mention of Whittier brings to mind another book of his, *Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal in the Province of Massachusetts Bay, 1678-9* (1849)—to give it its full title—about which there has arisen a totally unnecessary misunderstanding. It is often taken for granted that Whittier was only the editor of this work; but apart from the trifling facts that two poems which it incorporates were included in the collection published under his name later in the

same year, that it was advertised at least as early as December, 1849, as by him (see Longfellow's *The Seaside and the Fireside* (1850)), and that it was reprinted in the two-volume edition of his prose works of 1866, the proof that he was more than the mere editor will be quite obvious to anyone who will read the unsigned prefatory note to the first edition. What only could be meant by this?—"That there are passages indicative of a comparatively recent origin, and calculated to cast a shade of doubt over the entire narrative, the Editor would be the last to deny, notwithstanding its general accordance with historical verities and probabilities."

The book was first published anonymously, and one may suppose that Whittier, to begin with, meant it to be taken for an original document of the Seventeenth Century. But being a Quaker of strict veracity and prickly conscience, he probably felt compelled at the last moment to explain in language only just sufficiently veiled as not to be a complete revelation, what the book really was. And apparently even this did not appease his sense of probity, for in later-bound copies of the first edition his name is actually printed on

the back-strip of the binding. One can almost watch his conscience at work.

Of course, these explanations may be wide of the mark, but in the lack of certain knowledge one is entitled to draw inferences. In fact, it is the duty of a bibliographer to do so, and therefore I would like to see whether a real puzzle of Whittier bibliography (now that we are talking of him) cannot be explained more reasonably than has hitherto been attempted. No edition of his *Voices of Freedom* (1846) is known earlier than the fourth, and all three subsequent editions of that date differ textually only in the words "Fifth," "Sixth," or "Seventh" on their title-pages. Since Bierstadt compiled his bibliography of Whittier upwards of thirty years ago and suggested that there never was more than one edition altogether and that the whole thing was a device on the part of the publishers to give the impression of large sales, his assumption has been universally accepted. But it is quite untenable. Even if the publisher had dared to resort to such a fatuous, alien and dishonest trick as pretending that the first edition was the fourth and that there were further editions when there



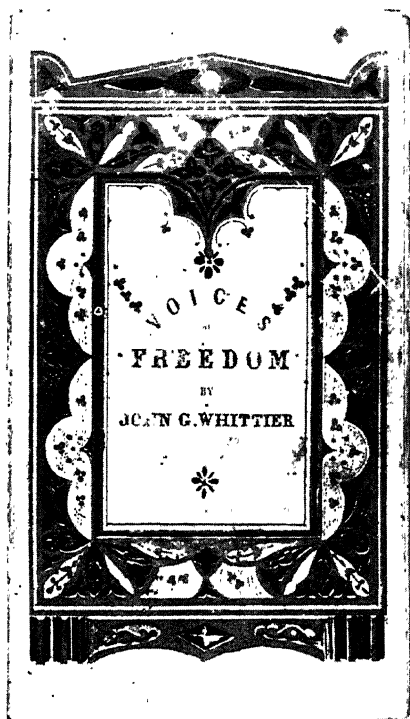
# VOICES OF FREEDOM,

BY

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

FIFTH AND COMPLETE EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA,  
PUBLISHED BY THOMAS S. CAVENDER.  
BOSTON: WAITE, PIERCE AND CO.  
NEW YORK: WILLIAM HARNED.  
1846.



Title-page of Whittier's *Voices of Freedom*, and wrapper of the only wrapped copy at present known.



were not; even if the editor had been prepared to tell a downright lie in his prefatory note, which states that "since the last edition was issued, several years have passed"; even if all that were true, there would still have been Whittier's conscience to reckon with. And there was no conscience in the whole country less amenable to fraudulent misrepresentation. Of course, one might argue that he *may* have known nothing about it or that he *may* have been induced to stretch a point in the cause of anti-slavery, but in the circumstances either supposition is preposterous.

What are the actual facts? To begin with some of the poems contain textual alterations which could only have been made by Whittier. For example, in the much-printed "Toussaint L'Ouverture" the first four lines, which had appeared in all previous printings, are discarded for the six new lines which appear in every subsequent printing of the poem. And mark the exact wording on the title-page of *Voices of Freedom*, taken in conjunction with what is said in the prefatory note about the last edition having been published some years previously—

“Fourth and complete edition.” Why “fourth” if there had not been three previous editions and why “complete” if the previous editions had not been incomplete? Now we know that there was no edition of *Voices of Freedom*, under that title, earlier than 1846, but we also know that before that date Whittier had published three volumes of verse containing anti-slavery poems, which are collected (with a few exceptions) in *Voices of Freedom*, together with a number of his new anti-slavery poems. It is obvious then that this little volume *is* the fourth, but first complete, edition of his anti-slavery poems.

Let us examine the contents in detail. The book contains 47 poems. Of these, 17 were reprinted from *Poems Written during the Progress of the Abolition Question* (1837), 6 were reprinted from *Poems* (1838)—this volume itself reprints the anti-slavery poems of the 1837 volume, while adding some fresh ones—8 were reprinted from *Lays of My Home* (1843), and 16 appeared for the first time in an American Whittier volume in *Voices of Freedom*. (I say “American” because in an English edition of his poems, entitled *Ballads and Other Poems*

1831.

# POEMS

BY

E. A. P.

EDGAR A. POE.

---

TOUT LE MONDE A RAISON — BOCHER-GODDARD.

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SECOND EDITION.

New York:

PUBLISHED BY ELAM BLISS.

1831.

Title-page of Poe's *Poems* (1831)—from a copy which belonged to Isaiah Garrett, a cadet with Poe at West Point at the time of publication.



(1844), two new anti-slavery poems appeared, which were afterwards printed in *Voices of Freedom*.) This "fourth" edition, therefore, was *not* given that numbering from base motives, but from motives of accuracy.

It may be asked why the volume was not simply called, "First Complete Edition." The answer is surely that, as it held some new poems and as the text of the old poems was revised, Whittier did not want it to be mistaken for a mere reprint. On the other hand, being the man he was, he could not have allowed a volume which consisted for the most part of poems taken from other volumes to have gone out under another title with no hint that it *was* chiefly a reprint. In short, the wording suited down to the ground his peculiarly exact feeling for the truth.

As to a fresh title being given to this edition, we must remember that it did contain sixteen new poems. And we may recall, in this respect, that Poe designated his *Poems* (1831) "Second Edition," although his previous volume, of which this was partly a reprint, was named *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems* (1829). And as to there being other unaltered editions in the

same year, why should that be surprising? Whittier's fame was growing—only three years later, in 1849, a publisher found it worth while to bring out a handsome illustrated edition of his collected poems, in which, incidentally, all the anti-slavery poems are grouped under the heading "Voices of Freedom"—and the movement against slavery was gathering force. It was to be expected that the book would go into several editions and that, since it was mainly a reprint of already well-known poems, there would be no textual changes from one edition to another. Or, of course, it is always possible that there was but one big printing, and that the publishers gave to every binding of, say, 500 copies a different edition-number. This is rather borne out by the fact that a careful textual comparison of the "fourth" and "seventh" editions shows not only the same misprints, but even the same broken and misplaced type. However, it is impossible to dogmatize beyond a certain point, though it is obvious that every copy of the book was printed from the same type.

Indeed, the true history of many American



books can, at this late hour, only be guessed at from circumstantial evidence. But as that kind of evidence, when strong, has brought a number of people to the gallows, one must treat it with respect when applied to bibliography. No doubt, if one had access to the old ledgers of a firm such as Houghton, Mifflin & Co.—which, in the Biblical style, succeeded to Houghton, Osgood & Co., which succeeded to James R. Osgood & Co., which succeeded to Fields, Osgood & Co., which succeeded to Ticknor & Fields (the friends and publishers of Hawthorne, Emerson, Whittier, Longfellow, Holmes and Lowell), which succeeded to Ticknor, Reed & Fields, which succeeded to William D. Ticknor & Co., which succeeded to William D. Ticknor, who, probably, was the survivor of the firm of Allen & Ticknor—no doubt, I repeat, if one had access to these old ledgers or to the archives of some other firms, one could clear up many uncertainties and learn much about the publishing methods of other days. But there would also be many disappointments: bibliographical niceties are, in their nature, too trivial to be recorded,

and the publishers of books are usually almost as ignorant of their points as are the authors of them.

Handicapped as we are, let us see to what extent internal evidence, aided by the few general facts that we know already, will help us to disentangle some of the riddles with which American bibliography abounds. We will consider a few typical cases by putting questions and then attempting to answer them.

Why is Volume I of Cooper's *Lionel Lincoln* dated 1825 and Volume II 1824?

If we examine the two title-pages, we shall note some striking differences: "In two volumes" appears on the first, nothing on the second; "By the Author of The Pioneers, Pilot, etc." appears on the first, "By the Author of Pioneers, Pilot, etc." on the second; in the first volume "Vol. I." is in plain type with simple double rules above and below, in the second volume in rustic type with fancy rules above and below; in the first volume "New-York" is lightly printed, in the second volume heavily; in the first volume there is a copyright notice on the back of the title-page, in the second—a most unusual



LIONEL LINCOLN;

OR,

**THE LEAGUER OF BOSTON.**

IN TWO VOLUMES.

---

"First let me talk with this Philosopher."

---

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE PIONEERS, PILOT, &c.

---

VOL. I.

---

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES WILEY,

D. FANSHAW, PRINTER.

---

1825.

LIONEL LINCOLN:

6P.

THE LEAGUER OF BOSTON.

---

I must let me talk with this Philosopher

---

BY THE AUTHOR OF PIONEERS, PILOT, &c.

—♦♦♦—  
Vol. II.

—♦♦♦—  
NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES WILEY.

D. FANSHAW, PRINTER

1824.



occurrence, which is true also of the first volume of Cooper's *The Pathfinder* (2 vols., 1840)—there is none; in the first volume the printing on the title-page is neat, in the second volume slovenly.

It is thus quite apparent that the two title-pages were set up at different times, although the same printer's name appears on both. The earlier date, the more elaborate type, and the mis-statement "Pioneers" for "The Pioneers"—a mistake which appears also on the copyright notice—would suggest that at first they were set up together with the date and in the style of Volume II, and that the title-page to Volume I was reprinted when it was discovered, maybe, that the copyright notice had been omitted from the versos of both volumes. Advantage would be taken of this necessity to reset the title-page, partly to change the date, since it was then, perhaps, getting toward the end of 1824, partly to correct the mistake of "Pioneers," and partly to produce better presswork.

That is to argue the matter in one direction, but it could also be argued in the opposite. The poor printing on the second title-page, the "Pio-

neers" mistake, the putting of the date literally correct and the omission of the copyright notice might be signs that this title-page, unlike that of Volume I, was hurriedly printed at the last moment—perhaps to replace sheets accidentally destroyed. And it would not have been such a heavy task, as the title and the half-title form a separate signature, whereas in the first volume the title and half-title are part of a larger signature.

Well, there are the facts and the theories, and it would be fun to hear two experts argue them pro and con. For it does seem to be one of those cases where internal evidence is on both sides at once. A hard nut to crack. And yet there must be some definite explanation, for cause and effect function in bibliography as in other things, and it is quite likely that it could be worked out absolutely from the book itself.

Why in the same author's *The Deerslayer* (2 vols., 1841) does the numeral "6" between brackets appear on the reverse of the title of volume I and the numeral "4" between brackets on the reverse of the title of volume II? To a Baconian, it must look almost like part of



a cypher meaning that Cooper was the author of something else.

The explanation, however, is that it was a publisher's vagary. *The Deerslayer*, although the last of the Leather-Stocking Tales in title-page date, is historically the first of the series; and Lea and Blanchard, the publishers, therefore occasionally inserted in Volume I a half-title indicating that the entire two-volume book was the first volume of the "Leather-Stocking Tales." I say "occasionally," because this half-title is very seldom present even in untouched copies of the book in original binding. They are genuine without it, though more desirable with it. Then they counted the preceding blank as pages 1 and 2, so that the reverse of the title would be page 6, and continued their paging accordingly; and since Volume II of *The Deerslayer* does not contain this leaf, the reverse of the title in that volume became page 4. This same curious device appears elsewhere in Cooper's works; but do not be disturbed at the apparent break of six pages in the pagination in the preliminary matter of *Mercedes of Castile* (2 vols., 1840)—it occurs in all copies, and the most reasonable explanation

is that Cooper so delayed his preface that the publishers were obliged to guess at its length when setting up the rest of the book, only to find, when the preface arrived, that it was too short to fit. A similar explanation accounts for the break of two pages in the pagination of the preliminary matter of Volume I of Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), in which volume, also, the blank leaf at the beginning, although no part of any signature and of different quality from the paper of the text, is included in the pagination.

Why was Hawthorne's tiny book, *The Celestial Rail-Road* (1843), published (according to the imprint on different copies) both by Wilder & Co., 46 Washington Street, Boston, and by James F. Fish, 52 Washington Street, Boston?

It was evidently first published by one firm and then taken over by the other; and as the name of Wilder & Co. appears in the Boston Directory for 1844 while that of James F. Fish does not appear till 1845, it is probable that copies with the Wilder imprint belong to the earlier issue. But as neither name is given in the Directory for 1843, the year of the book's pub-

# AMONG MY BOOKS.

*SECOND SERIES.*

BY

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL,  
PROFESSOR OF BELLES-LETTERS IN HARVARD COLLEGE.



BOSTON:  
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY,  
LATE TICKNOR & FIELD, AND FIELD, OSGOOD, & CO.  
1876.

Title-page of the first issue of Lowell's *Among My Books. Second Series*, describing him as a professor of "Belles-Letters."



lication, the proof is not complete. This is a case in which a comparison of the condition of the type might yield a clue—but who has two imprints of this almost vanished pamphlet to compare?

Why do a few copies of Lowell's *Among My Books. Second Series* (1876) bear the date 1875, instead of 1876, on the copyright notice, although the latter is invariably the date on the title-page?

On the title-page of the 1875 issue Lowell is described as "Professor of Belles-Letters at Harvard College." The mistake was immediately rectified and the 1876 issue reads, "Belles-Lettres." But by law an application for copyright must be accompanied by an exact transcript of the title-page, and therefore the book had to be copyrighted afresh when the title was altered, even though it was only to correct an error. The change in the date arose from the fact that the book with the revised title-page was copyrighted just when the New Year had begun; the actual day was January 8, 1876. That the title-page of the first issue was dated 1876 arose from the well-known custom of dat-

ing books published in November and December a year ahead. But a copyright notice should be dated with the year in which the book is printed, and hence the 1875 in the first issue. The chain of evidence holds in every link.

Why are some copies of Whittier's *In War Time* (1864) five-sixteenths of an inch taller than the ordinary first edition and bound in a totally different binding with altered lettering? I say "some copies," but I have only seen two, and such variants are evidently rare. The lack of a gilt top and the fact that the edges are uncut account for the extra height, but why should the publishers have gone to the expense, especially at such a time, of having elaborate new brasses cut?

Although it is impossible to make any dogmatic statement, the probability is that this was the edition of the book bound in England. It is true that the title-page is precisely the same as the American one, but the binding is decidedly more English than American, and the fact that one of the two copies was found in England adds weight to the theory. After all, the sheets may have been sold to an English publisher and

bound by him just as they were; that would account for the lack of an English publisher's name on the title-page. But the copy in the British Museum is in the American binding, so that this, or any other, theory is far from crystal-clear.

Every collector will find that some books are commoner than might reasonably be expected and some decidedly rarer. Such discoveries always arouse one's curiosity, but the clue to the mystery can usually be ascertained by going into the facts. Take the case of Melville's *Mardi* (2 vols., 1849). Although this was only his third book, it is by far the commonest of all his books. And when we ask ourselves why this should be, the answer stares us in the face.

Melville's most popular works were his first two, *Typee* (1846) and *Omoo* (1847). They made him a swift reputation and no doubt impressed his publishers, Harper & Brothers, with his possibilities as a "seller." Presumably, therefore, they printed a large edition of *Mardi*, which (without any presumption) turned out to be a dismal failure. And that was the fate of all his other books, and the publishers never again ran the risk of being left with masses of unwanted

copies. And so, even if there had not been a fire at Harper's which destroyed many copies of Melville's later novels, *Mardi* would still be his commonest book.

An example of a work that is much rarer than one would imagine it ought to be is Longfellow's *Christus* (3 vols., 1872). Although published at the height of his fame and preceded and followed by books which are anything but scarce, *Christus* is remarkably elusive. Why is this?

One must remember, first of all, that it is only a reprint, though with new introductory and intercalary poems, of *The Divine Tragedy* (1871), *The Golden Legend* (1851) and *The New England Tragedies* (1868)—to give them their order as they appear in *Christus*—and, secondly, that it was produced in three volumes. The argument is, therefore, that a reprint in three volumes was more than the public bargained for and that the work had a poor sale. In a case like this the publishers' records would be invaluable; but, failing a sight of them, one can only say that such an argument, though not particularly convincing, carries some weight. The fact does remain that the three volumes of *Christus* in any



condition are uncommonly hard to come by, and that there must be a reason for it.

Problems of the kind I have been discussing are always cropping up, and I have devoted these pages to this aspect of bibliography in order to prove how a little general knowledge, combined with an ordinary capacity for reasoning, can, at any rate, suggest explanations that sound feasible. And one must never forget that, in the effort to unravel a small problem, one may stumble upon something really big. Books keep any number both of secrets and of clues within their covers.

The weakness of circumstantial evidence is that it is never quite satisfying to the imaginative intelligence. Even when it seems clearest it may be refuted by established facts, and to keep an open mind on the very verge of conviction is wisest. Longfellow's poem, *The Hanging of the Crane* (1875), gives us an example where the evidence as to priority of edition points powerfully in one direction, while the facts are just the reverse. Two editions, one in 8vo with 41 illustrations and one in 12mo with 15 illustrations, were published with the same date, and at

first glance there is nothing to show which is the earlier. But the indefatigable Chamberlain, comparing the texts, discovered that line 5 of page 37 in the 8vo edition reads "A Princess from the Fairy Tales," and the same line (line 5 of page 27) in the 12mo edition, "A Princess from the Fairy Isles." Now, if we read a few lines of the poem the internal evidence is convincing. Here they are:

"There are two guests at table now;  
The King, deposed and older grown,  
No longer occupies the throne,—  
The crown is on his sister's brow;  
A Princess from the Fairy Tales,  
The very pattern girl of girls,  
All covered and embowered in curls,  
Rose-tinted from the Isle of Flowers,  
And sailing with soft, silken sails  
From far-off Dreamland into ours."

Surely "Tales" must be right. To begin with, this is a poem in which every line rhymes with some other; but there is no rhyme to "Isles," while there is one to "Tales"—four lines beneath "A Princess from the Fairy Tales" we read "And sailing with soft, silken sails." Secondly, "Fairy Isles" would clash with "Isle of Flowers," three

lines below. Thirdly, the metaphor of "Princess from the Fairy Tales" works in prettily with the "Dreamland" of the last quoted line. Fourthly, the sense is, if anything, rather better with "Tales" than with "Isles."

From the internal evidence, therefore, there could be no doubt but that "Tales" is the revised reading and that the 8vo edition, which holds it, is the second. It is true that when the poem was reprinted in Longfellow's next book, *The Masque of Pandora* (1875), the reading "Isles" was retained, but that means little; it might have been set up from the 12mo edition, and nothing is easier than to overlook an error.

And yet all our logic would be in vain, for we know from Longfellow's own letters that the 8vo edition was published in November, 1874, and the 12mo edition in January, 1875. But why the correct reading "Tales" was altered to "Isles" in the second and all subsequent printings seems like an inexplicable aberration.

It is almost a relief to turn to bibliographical problems which appear to be insoluble save by sheer guesswork. But there, again, one never knows whether the answer may not be lurking in

an old file of correspondence. Indeed, one never does, and as an instance of what letters may reveal let me recount how two brief notes from Oliver Wendell Holmes, recently discovered, have finally settled the priority of the different contemporary editions of his *John Lothrop Motley* (1879).

Hitherto it has been universally held that the really scarce abridged edition in wrappers, reprinted from the "Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society," preceded the ordinary published edition of the same date. But these letters show that the reverse is the truth. In the first of them, dated January 1, 1879, Holmes, in reply to a critic of the Memoir, writes, "The only important omission which has been pointed out is the fact that his [Motley's] name is on the roll of the Latin School students." Now, if we look at the published edition (page 7) we see that Motley began his schooling at Jamaica Plain and Northampton and that no mention is made of the Boston Latin School. In the second letter, dated January 16, 1879, and addressed to John Wilson & Son, the publishers of the pamphlet—the book was published by

296 Beacon St. Boston

Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> 1879

Mrs. Wilson,

Gentlemen,

Can I, or can  
I not insert a paragraph  
relating to Mr. Motley's  
connection with the  
Boston Latin School in  
the first portion of my  
Memoir, ~~as~~ I, it ahead  
I think off? Please inform  
me and much oblige

Yours truly

DW. Holmes



Houghton, Osgood & Co.—Holmes writes, “Can I, or can I not insert a paragraph relating to Mr. Motley’s connection with the Boston Latin School in the first portion of my Memoir?” And, behold, on pages 5 and 6 of the pamphlet there is printed a long letter describing Motley’s attendance at the Boston Latin School—a letter of which there is no trace in the published volume. The proof is as complete and convincing as a demonstration in Euclid.

Truly, it is a bibliographical axiom, just as it is a book-collecting axiom, never to accept final defeat. And therefore in putting a few of those questions which still await an answer, I do so not without hope of an ultimate solution.

How does it happen that only four copies of the first issue of Longfellow’s *Voices of the Night* (1839) are, as yet, known to have survived?

In these copies line 10 of page 78 reads, “His, Hector’s arm; and his the might”—in all other known copies it reads, “The arm of Hector, and the might.” There is no doubt as to which text is the earlier, for the first form derives directly from the reading, “His the Archæan’s arm; the

might" in *Coplas de Don Jorge Manrique* (1833)—it was in this first volume of (translated) poems by Longfellow that these verses originally appeared in a somewhat different text—while the second form is that of the second and later editions of *Voices of the Night*. But even assuming that Longfellow quickly altered the line, is it not rather strange that out of the 900 copies of the first edition only four with the earlier reading have so far been recorded?

And why does the first issue of the illustrated edition of Bryant's *A Forest Hymn* (1860) have "C. A. Alvord, Printer, New York," on the reverse of the title and the second issue, "Printed by Alvord"?

Did the firm change its name slightly or did the second wording sound more elegant to the printer? Who can tell?

How is it that copies of Whittier's *The Bay of Seven Islands* (1883) occasionally appear without the publisher's monogram on the back-strip of the binding?

We know that the reason why the first issue of the same author's *Among the Hills* (1869) has no monogram on the binding is



His was Octavian's prosperous star,  
 The rush of Cæsar's conquering car  
 At battle's call ;  
 His, Scipio's virtue ; his, the skill,  
 And the indomitable will,  
 Of Hannibal.

His was a Trajan's goodness, — his  
 A Titus' noble charities,  
 And righteous laws ;  
 His, Hector's arm ; and his the might  
 Of Tully, to maintain the right  
 In truth's just cause ;

His was a Trajan's goodness, — his  
 A Titus' noble charities,  
 And righteous laws ;  
 The arm of Hector, and the might  
 Of Tully, to maintain the right  
 In truth's just cause ;

(Above) Part of page 78 of the first issue of Longfellow's *Voices of the Night*, with the earlier form of line 10. Below (Stanza of the second issue, showing the later form of the line.



that it was published just as Fields, Osgood & Co. had taken over Ticknor & Fields and before their monogram was cut; but *The Bay of Seven Islands* was published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. when they had already been some three years in possession of the firm. There is, therefore, no valid explanation of which I have knowledge.

A few pages back I spoke of the rarity of Longfellow's *Christus* (3 vols., 1872) and was able to offer some sort of explanation. But there are other books which one would suppose would be common enough, and yet are unexpectedly rare, about which I can offer no explanation. Cooper's *Jack Tier* (2 vols., 1848), Holmes's *Medical Essays* (1883), Whittier's *Jack in the Pulpit* (1884) and Longfellow's *Michael Angelo* (1884) are in this class. Why are they uncommon to the point of real elusiveness, when one might justly expect them to be the very reverse? I can't say, but I hope that some of my readers can.

But enough of these pleasant puzzles for winter evenings.

## V

Reason for variety of bindings in American first editions—Some instances—So-called “presentation” bindings—Book-production in the Civil War—Importance of paper and binding in bibliography—*Two Years Before the Mast*—A too dogmatic statement—Wrappers, and the evidence from advertisements thereon—“Semi-anonymous” books—Magazine supplements—Problems of binding in Cooper—*The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*—*Leaves of Grass*.

ONE of the most disconcerting things about American books of the Nineteenth Century is the variety of the bindings in which they were issued. To understand the reasons for this we must appreciate, first, the nature of the public that was being catered to and, second, the exigencies of the binding trade in those days.

The population was a scattered one and full of violently contrasted elements. Communities differed greatly in their attitude and their tastes, and out of the material struggle for existence a new reading public was constantly being formed. Money was scarce in many parts, and though people wanted to buy books, they had to be tempted with low prices. On the other hand,

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

in the larger towns there were already families of established wealth who were out to foster culture in the New World. Thus, while we find books by such authors as Poe and Melville produced in paper wrappers as well as in cloth, we find others by more conventionally respectable authors, such as Bryant and Whittier, produced in leather as well as in cloth.

The publishers of that time were no more anxious to waste their resources and dissipate their energies than are publishers to-day, but they had to allow for many needs and bait their hooks accordingly. Every variety of binding was tried, and he would be a rash man who asserted that he knew all the different habiliments in which certain volumes appeared. Even a relatively obscure book like Holmes's *Astræa* (1850) was got up in four or more styles, though at least one of them was probably of the "remainder" type; while a work like Lowell's *Poems: Second Series* (1848), which could not be expected to have a large sale, was put forth in boards, in blue cloth uncut, in brown cloth and in brown-gray cloth, both with cut edges—all three cloth covers having different blind designs on the sides. And who

knows whether it did not also appear in wrappers and in some gorgeous gift binding.

Perhaps no book was experimented on more elaborately than Longfellow's *The Seaside and the Fireside* (1850). Ignoring the special bindings in yellow boards or leather for the large paper edition, we find it in gray boards with paper label, in chocolate-colored cloth bare of ornament, in blue, green or scarlet cloth gilt-edged and heavily gilt on back and sides, or in purple, black, green or scarlet cloth similar to the previous binding as to edges and back but with a small and different gilt design—it is the blind tooling of the chocolate-colored copies filled in with gold leaf—on the sides.

And yet it is easy enough to trace the reasons which must have prompted the publishers to spend all this money. The copies in boards represent, no doubt, the distinctive form of the first edition, those in plain cloth would be so bound to match the revised complete edition (called "Second Edition" on the title-page) of *Outre-Mer* (1846) and the fourth issue of *Kavanagh* (1849), while the gaily dressed ones were meant for the Christ-

mas "gift book" trade, the work having been published on December 20, 1849. The different colors of cloth would help the window display, while the different degrees of richness in the gilt may have meant different prices or perhaps an effort of the publishers to economize when the extra-rich ones were used up.

The mention of gift bindings suggests the propriety of turning aside for a moment to protest against the habit of calling them "presentation" bindings. That conjures up the picture of an author's own presentation copies, but in truth the author had nothing to do with them. Indeed, far from their being bound in this lavish style (it applies especially to certain works of Hawthorne, Longfellow and Whittier) for the author to give away, they were so bound for the publishers to sell at higher prices. They were not done as free gifts, they were done as commercial speculations, and it is the rarest thing to find a "presentation" binding which was actually presented by the author. That they were meant as presents is true, but that is another story altogether. To call them "presentation"

copies inevitably makes people connect them directly with the author, and many collectors buy them under this erroneous impression.

To resume. The necessity of appealing to many different tastes accounts, therefore, for all kinds of apparent vagaries in the bindings of American books; but we must also remember that the binding business itself was much less organized than it is now. It is evident that binders did not keep large supplies on hand and that, if they ran short of one kind of cloth, they used another without a moment's hesitation. Publishers liked to see their books bound in a variety of colors, for that made good advertising; but binders went a step further and often bound them in a variety of cloths and with end-papers that varied greatly.

A telling example of all these trends may be traced in Melville's *Omoo* (1847). Apart from the two-volume edition in paper wrappers, it was bound in cloth of at least three colors, purple, brown and black, and of at least four varieties, mottled, striped, dotted and smooth. Then, again, some copies have marbled end-papers with red and blue streaks on a yellow base, some with



*from her friend*  
NATURE. *R.W.E.*  
*1 second*  
*over 1841* *G. Ellen Weston*

---

"Nature is but an image or imitation of wisdom, the last thing  
of the soul; nature being a thing which doth only do, but not  
know."

Plotinus.

---

BOSTON:  
JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.

M DCCC XXXVI.

Title-page of Emerson's *Nature*, bearing his dated inscription to Mary Russell.



## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

blue, black and red circular markings on a white base, and some have plain white end-papers.

Between them, indeed, publishers and binders succeeded in producing the most staggering permutations. Even in the early days of cloth bindings they were at it, and such books as Emerson's *Nature* (1836) and Whittier's *Mogg Megone* (1836) can be found in cloth of different colors and different figurations.

Now if uniformity was regarded as an unessential in the days of peace, one can imagine what happened in the stress of the Civil War. Soon after its start binders were probably feeling the pinch, for it is stated in the informed bibliography of Whitman written by Miss C. Wells and Mr. A. F. Goldsmith that of the third edition of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1860-1) "as many as twelve varieties of color, cloth, and embossing have been noted." As the conflict progressed, things got worse. Somewhere about 1863 Ticknor & Fields's standard chocolate-colored cloth was exhausted; certainly it does not appear thereafter. Whittier's *In War Time* (1864), published at the very height of the war and when civilian supplies must have been nearly

exhausted, can be found in at least eight distinct shades of color and seven distinct varieties of stamping. And in all probability there are other colors and other stampings, for the binders were evidently compelled to use up any scraps they could lay their hands on. All this becomes the more comprehensible when we recall the straits the civilian population was reduced to in the World War.

Paper-makers, too, were apparently hard put to it in those fateful years, for we see a book like Bryant's *Thirty Poems* (1864) printed both on wove and on laid paper. The laid paper is a trifle thicker, so that the book measures 14/16 in. across the top, against the 11/16 in. of the wove paper. There has long been a question as to which came first, but the probability is that there was no premeditated order and that the printers were forced to use what paper they could get when they could get it. I have a copy on wove paper with an inscription dated January, 1864, while the Wakeman catalogue lists a copy on laid paper with an inscription dated March, 1864. This is no evidence of actual priority, but it *is* evidence that they appeared at about

the same time; and it is quite possible that the book was printed on both papers almost simultaneously. It is worth mentioning here that copies in the rather scarce blue and gold gift binding are to be found on either paper.

In this case we happen to possess the approximately accurate evidence of dated copies, but we must remember that the same plates of a book, unchanged even as to the title-page, were sometimes printed from over a series of years. In such instances the paper may be a real clue. It fairly often happened that different paper was used for different editions, and the earliest issue or issues of such books as Emerson's *The Conduct of Life* (1860), Thoreau's *Cape Cod* (1865), and Lowell's *Biglow Papers. Second Series* (1867)—this last can be proved readily by the bad state of the type in subsequent issues: see especially the word "writing" in the fourth line from the foot of page v—are printed on thinner paper than are the later. And books like Longfellow's *The Hanging of the Crane* (8vo edition, 1875) and Whittier's *Hazel-Blossoms* (1875) are found on paper of varying thickness; priority is not easy to decide in these cases, but as a rule

books printed on thicker paper are later issues. A careful study of the texture and color of papers would probably tell us a great deal about issues and editions that we do not know at present, and I venture to think that the scientific bibliographer of the future will pay much more attention to this subject than has hitherto been given to it.

The original sheets of certain books, owing to too large an edition having been printed, sometimes seem to have lasted for years, being bound as needed. This led to rather quaint results when the publishers kept changing their name. Whittier's *Miriam* (1871) is an instance. It was first published by Fields, Osgood & Co., and carries their name on the title-page and their monogram on the binding. But the firm then underwent one of its periodic alterations, and a new title-page, still dated 1871 but bearing the name of James R. Osgood & Co., was printed, while the monogram on the binding was suitably changed. Years passed, and Houghton, Mifflin & Co. reigned in their stead. Without any change to the title some more of the sheets were apparently bound up, only this time with the new name on

the spine. The 1871 sheets appear to have lasted for at least a decade, although, of course, the publishers may simply have reprinted again and again from the same plates, foolishly omitting to change the date on the title-page.

Indeed, several books owe their bibliographical points to the quick-change acrobatics of this firm. To give a couple of examples: the first issue of Holmes's *Poems* (149) has the Ticknor & Co. imprint on the title-page, the second issue the Ticknor, Reed & Fields imprint; the first issue of Hawthorne's *Passages from the American Note-Books* (2 vols., 1868) has the imprint of Ticknor & Fields, and the second of Fields, Osgood & Co.

Another bemusing thing about American books is that different copies of the same edition are liable to vary in height. This occurs with such famous first editions as Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* (1837) and Emerson's *Essays* (1841), and with plenty of others. Sometimes there appears to be no particular reason for it, sometimes it is caused by certain copies being left uncut, as in Lowell's *Poems: Second Series* (1848), and sometimes by certain copies being

left ungilded and therefore unshaved down, as in the 12mo edition of Whittier's *Mabel Martin* (1876). But publishing methods were then so slap-dash that many of these variations were more fortuitous than calculated. One never can tell when one may come upon a copy of a book from an eighth to a quarter of an inch taller than the average. The common habit of suggesting that such a copy is a "large paper" one is altogether childish; a much better term would be "freak copy." Of course, there are cases where we happen to know that the first issue of a book differs in height from the second—Emerson's *English Traits* (1856) is said to be such a one, though I am not convinced of it—but unless we do have special knowledge or unless a book carries the evidence within itself, we may justifiably assume that variations in height are due merely to chance.

The original bindings of books and pamphlets, formerly discarded with maddening zeal for finer raiment, are now examined for points with the care given to title-pages. For instance, Emerson's *Essays* (1841) must not have the words "First Series" on the back-strip; Hawthorne's *A Wonder-Book* (1852) must have a simple

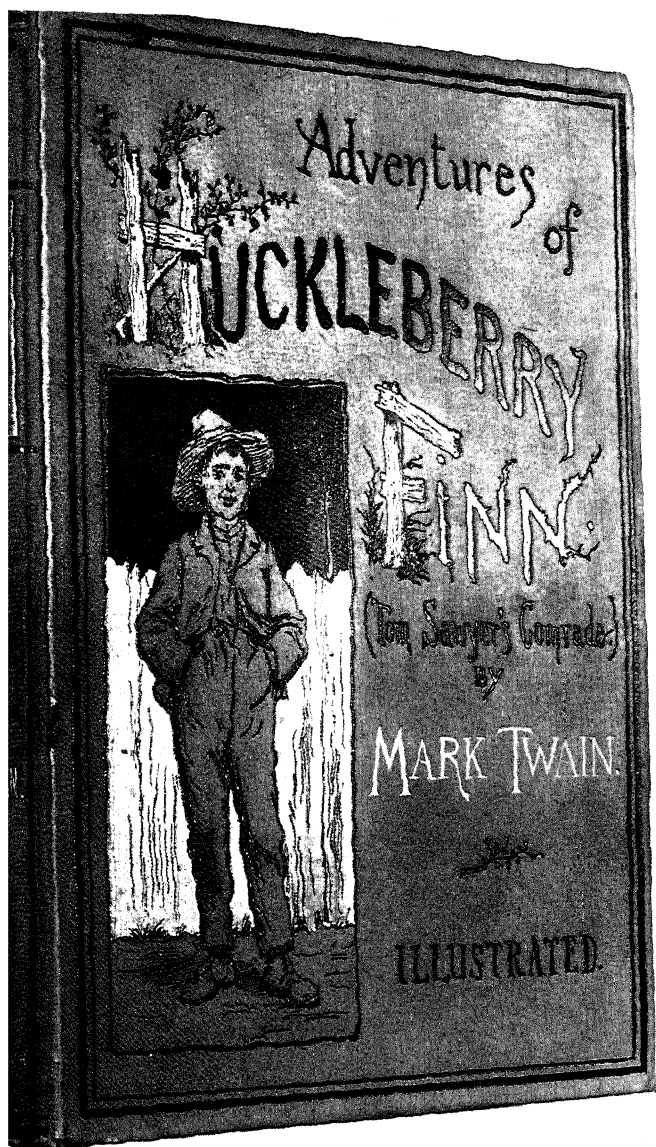


design on the top quarter of the back-strip alone, and not the elaborate design covering the entire back-strip which was adopted when the book was reprinted (but without change of date) in order to match the binding of *Tanglerwood Tales* (1853), whose sub-title was "A Second Wonder-Book"; Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (2 vols., 1852) must have the publisher's name in full, "J. P. Jewett & Co" and not merely "Jewett & Co." on the back-strip; the large paper copies of Holmes's *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1859) must have "Boston" and not "Ticknor and Co." on the back-strip; Whittier's *Among the Hills* (1869), as mentioned before, must not have a monogram on the back-strip; while Lowell's *My Study Windows* (1871), despite the "J. R. Osgood & Co." imprint on the title-page, must have the monogram of Fields, Osgood & Co. on the back-strip.

The above are proven points of priority, but I am by no means sure (not that that amounts to much) that copies of Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840) are not just as early in black cloth as in drab, or that copies of Longfellow's *Evangeline* (1847) are not just as early in glazed

boards as in dull ones. Why should not both forms have been produced simultaneously? It was very much the fashion of the age. I admit the presence in that storehouse of Longfellow information, the library at Craigie House in Cambridge, each in dull gray boards, of Longfellow's copy, and the copies he gave his father, his sister and his wife; but, after all, does that show anything more than his own preference for gray to yellow, or that the examples sent to him happened to be from a parcel that contained only gray copies? More significant, bibliographically speaking, is the fact that not one of these four copies—and two of them bear the publication date—has any advertisements at all.

When it comes to Dana's book, however, the evidence is really rather strong. The volume was No. 106 of Harper's Family Library—one of the earliest series of the many lists of volumes which that enterprising house produced to satisfy the enormous appetite for literature which swept over America after 1830. Quantity production was necessary to meet the demand; by 1840 new volumes were coming out more rapidly than once a month. The series was uniformly bound in two



Cover of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885).



styles, each style carrying on the spine the number of the particular volume in the series—one style in black cloth with plain back cover, the other in drab cloth with the titles of the preceding numbers of the series listed in minute type on the outside back cover. Obviously when we find some drab covers with the list on the back ending at 105, and others with the titles running on to 107 or 120 (there are many variants), we can be sure that the only desirable *drab* binding is that which lists no later titles than number 105. But this is far from proving that the black cloth binding is not equally early. The Dana family copy, with the author's signature and corrections by his father and brother, is in black cloth. Moreover, while the black copies print "Life before the Mast" on the spine, the drab copies print "Two Years before the Mast"—which rather suggests a later revision to match the title-page wording. But as an author may own any copy of his book and as the lay-out of the full description on the spine is quite different in the two bindings, neither fact proves anything authoritatively. The probability is that both bindings were issued simultaneously.

These, however, are open questions about which collectors may please themselves. But sometimes statements are made as to the priority of bindings which seem unjustifiably dogmatic. Mr. Newton, for instance, in his entertaining volume, *This Book-Collecting Game* (1928), has the remark that the first issue of the first edition of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) must be bound in blue cloth. It is true that copies in blue cloth are decidedly rarer than copies in green cloth, but it is by no means certain that they are earlier. They may be, for as far as one can ascertain the copies in blue cloth represent the edition sold by subscription throughout the country while the copies in green cloth represent the ordinary trade edition, but it has never been settled. Yet Mr. Newton has the ear of the public and blue *Huckleberry Finns* are now the rage.

In former days people had the reprehensible habit of binding up pamphlets into volumes after tearing off the wrappers. Certain Emerson pamphlets, for instance, are common enough without their wrappers and very uncommon with them, and even allowing for the natural fragility



The seven wrapped parts of Irving's *The Sketch Book*. (By courtesy of the Yale University Library.)





of the covers one must put a great deal of this down to ignorant vandalism. Without their wrappers pamphlets have, indeed, an utterly forlorn aspect, as though shivering in their nakedness, and when we consider how much bibliographical evidence may have been printed on the lost wrappers our distress at their plight is all the more acute. In truth, many wrappers hold essential evidence. A collector undertaking the vain but enthralling task of gathering the twenty numbers of Irving's *Salmagundi* (1807-8), in first editions—is there another set in existence apart from the one in the Huntington library?—can find part of the evidence as to the edition only on the wrappers themselves. The same is true of two other works by Irving, *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819-20), the seven parts of which are just not too rare to be impossible in first editions, and *Tales of a Traveller* (1824), a book as to which the great collectors, with a frequency which must have been irritating to them, seem almost invariably to have lacked one or another of the four wrapped parts. (The bibliography of *The Sketch Book*, by the way, is so difficult as almost to be worthy

the labor of a monograph; perhaps at this distance of time it can never be unravelled—which should be the greatest incentive to some one to make the attempt.)

Wrappers sometimes help us to determine an issue by the evidence of their advertisements. When the two volumes of Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846) are found bound up in one volume in cloth, as they almost invariably are, there is nothing to tell whether the issue with the names of the printer and stereotyper on the reverse of the title-pages is the first, or whether that position belongs to one of the issues which contain neither name or only one of the names. There are two title-pages whose reverse may print one or more of the various combinations, and nearly all of the possible combinations sometimes occur on one or the other of the title-pages. But when we get the work in wrappers there is no longer any question. The two volumes were numbers XVII and XVIII of Wiley & Putnam's "Library of American Authors." Only copies with Craighead as the printer (the later printer was Osborne), and with the stereotyper's name, contain the correct advertisements on the

WILEY AND PUTNAM'S

# LIBRARY OF AMERICAN BOOKS.

- No. I. JOURNAL OF AN AMERICAN CRUISER, EDITED BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. 50 cents.
- II. TALES BY EDGAR A. POE. 50 cts.
- III. LETTERS FROM ITALY, BY J. T. HEADLEY. 50 cents.
- IV., XII. THE WILKIN AND THE CAIRN, BY W. GLIMORE SIMES. 3 parts, 50 cents each.
- V. BEN ADEL AND THE LITTLE MASHATTAN, BY CORNELIUS MATTHEWS. 25 cts.
- VI. WANDERINGS OF A PILGRIM UNDER THE SHADOW OF MOUNT BLANC, BY GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D.D. 38 cts.
- VII. WESTERN CLEARINGS, BY MARY CLAYTON (Mrs. Kirkland). Author of "A New Home," "Who'll Follow?" "Forest Life," &c. 50 cts.
- VIII. RAVES AND OTHER POEMS, BY EDGAR A. POE. 31 cts.
- IX. VIEWS AND REVIEWS IN AMERICAN HISTORY, LITERATURE, & FICTION, BY W. G. SIMES. 50 cents.
- X. THE ALP AND THE RUINE, BY J. T. HEADLEY. 37½ cts.
- XI. THE PILGRIM IN THE SHADOW OF THE JUNGFRAU ALP, BY GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D.D. 50 cts.
- XIII., XIV. TYPE; A RESIDENCE IN THE MARQUESSAS, BY HERMAN MELVILLE. 2 Parts, 37 1-2 cents each.
- XV. THE WILDERNESS AND THE WAR PATH, BY JAMES HALL. Price 50 cents.
- XVI. SCENES AND THOUGHTS IN EUROPE, BY GEORGE H. CALVERT. Price 50 Cents.
- XVII., XVIII. MOSSES FROM AN OLD MANSE, BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. 2 Parts, 50 cts. each.
- XIX., XX. PAPERS ON LITERATURE AND ART, BY S. MARGARET FULLER. 2 Parts, 50 cents each.
- XXI., XXII. THE EARLY JESUIT MISSIONS IN NORTH AMERICA, BY REV. WM. INGRAM KIP. 2 Parts, 37½ cents each.

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The correct (left) back wrapper of Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*, listing 15 titles;



back wrappers showing but 15 entries (in 18 numbers) in the series. Some of the Craighead copies, and all later copies with either the wrong printer, only one name, or no name at all, show either 16 or 17 entries (in 20 or 22 numbers), particularly on the back wrapper of the second volume.

Wrappers, again, occasionally present variants of their own. Longfellow's *Outre-Mer* (2 parts, 1833-4) is one of the rarest of American first editions in wrappers (the second part was also issued in boards, and the two parts were afterwards bound as one in cloth), and therefore it is like adding insult to injury for the harassed collector to be told that the front wrapper to Part I appears in two forms—with and without a five-line quotation from Sir John Maundeville. But any port in a storm might well be the prayer of a man searching for a first edition of *Outre-Mer*; even a rebound copy is more than most people can hope for.

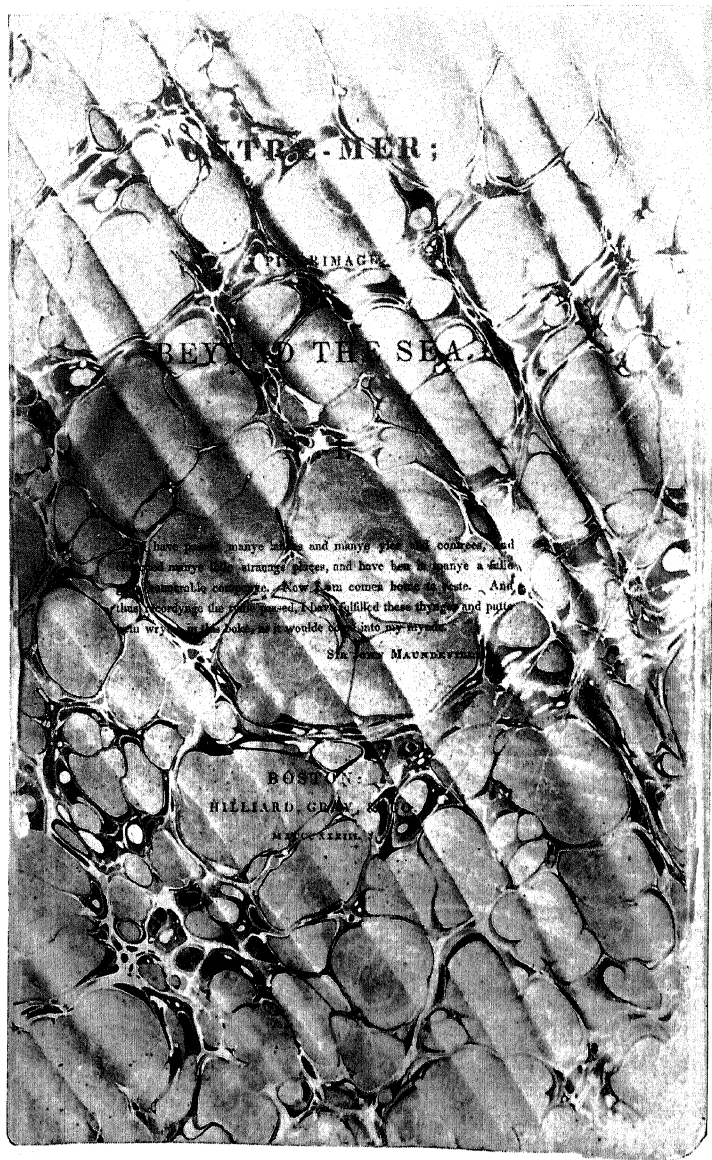
And the actual text of a book may be bound up, in more senses than one, with the wrappers. For instance, the first issue of Lowell's *Heartsease and Rue* (1888), in which the last line on

page 63 is dropped, exists, apparently, only in the form of review copies done up in plain, unlettered gray wrappers. The second issue of the book is common in either variety of its binding, but the first issue in wrappers is very rare.

Whittier's *The Supernaturalism of New England* (1847) is an example of a book in which the direct evidence of authorship appears alone upon the wrapper. The title-page has no author's name, the wrapper has Whittier's name in full. In this respect it may be mentioned that Mr. Vrest Orton, who compiled the hand-list of Whittier's works for *American First Editions* (1929), had apparently never seen a copy with wrappers, as the book there is termed "anonymous." Could one ask for more decisive evidence of the importance of wrappers?

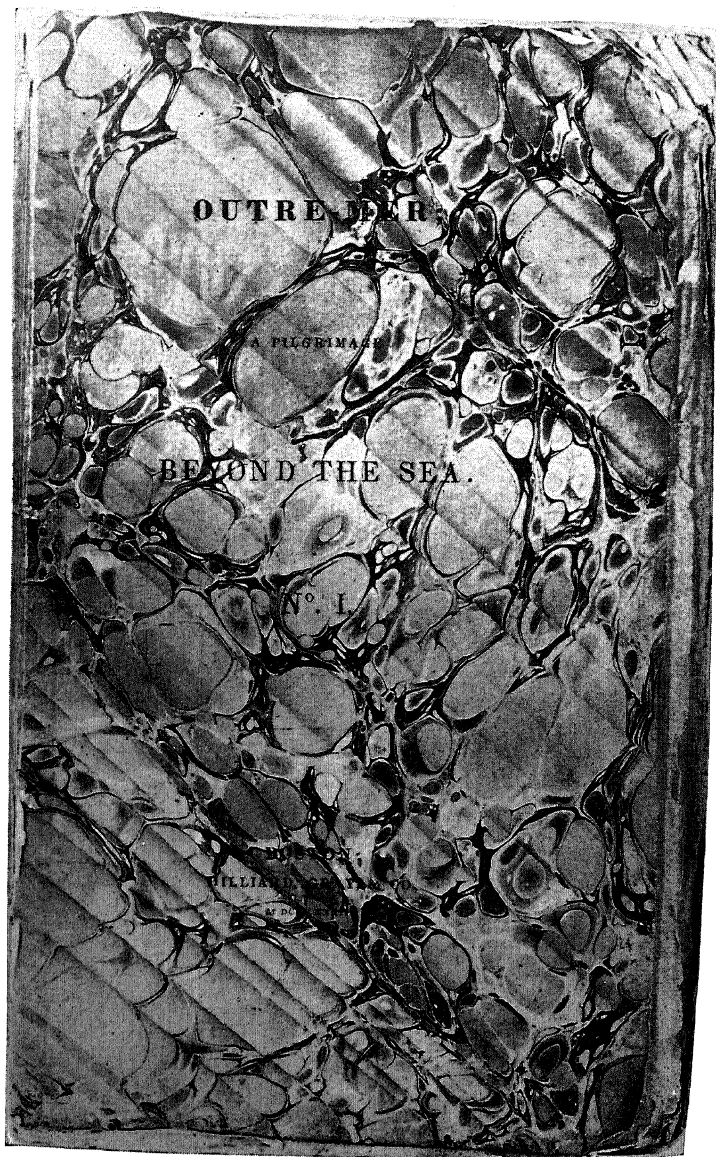
Though not germane to the argument, I might observe that the same compiler also calls Whittier's *The Stranger in Lowell* (1845) "anonymous." But though this book carries no author's name either on the wrappers or the front of the title-page, it *does* carry the author's name on the copyright notice. Surely that should be considered. One might as well call Holmes's *The Poet*





Usual form of wrapper of Part I of Longfellow's *Outre-Mer*, containing a quotation from Sir John Maundeville.





Unusual form of wrapper of Part I of Longfellow's *Outre-Mer*, without the quotation from Sir John Maundeville.



*at the Breakfast-Table* (1872) anonymous, for his name also appears only on the copyright notice; and even *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1858) might come under the ban, for though Holmes signed the preface in full and his name is on the copyright notice, it is not on the title-page proper. (Curiously enough, he did put his name on the title-page of *The Professor at the Breakfast-Table* (1860).) If one must be meticulous, let us refer to such books as “semi-anonymous.”

Most of the wrappers of that period were not merely devoid of ornament, but were of a positive and uninspiring plainness. But every now and then the publishers would go to the other extreme and produce wrappers with an effort at artistic decoration, which was sometimes quite successful and sometimes grotesque. The design on the wrappers of Longfellow's *The Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems* (1846)—make sure that the wrapper is dated 1845—is pleasing and dignified, while the design on the wrappers of Lowell's *Conversations on Some of the Old Poets* (1845)—an illuminated design of Gothic aspect—called forth from the late Mr. Everard Mey-

nell the witty and just remark that it looked like "a cross between Viollet-le-Duc and a cigar band." Similar not too beautiful illuminated wrappers appear on the single recorded copy in wrappers of Whittier's *Voices of Freedom* (1846), and on the two compilations edited by Longfellow, *The Waif* (1845) and *The Estray* (1847). It will be noted that, just as in the case of bindings in yellow boards, these exotic forms occur only at a particular period. Styles "date" the outer covering of books just as they do of men and women.

Certain supplements to magazines, such as Whitman's *Franklin Evans* (1842), which appeared as an extra to "The New World," and Cooper's *Le Mouchoir* (1843), which appeared as an extra to "Brother Jonathan," were first issued without wrappers, but were afterwards put into wrappers and sold as separate publications. Although these last may properly be called second issues, they are much more valuable than the copies without wrappers. And, therefore, while strictly accurate, it is rather misleading to read in the authoritative bibliography of Whitman and in the introduction to the reprint of

THE  
SUPERNATURALISM  
OF  
NEW ENGLAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"THE STRANGER IN LOWELL."

NEW YORK & LONDON:  
WILEY & PUTNAM.  
1847.

"Supernaturalism of this kind, moving well, and flying well,  
prompted by a custom which is to be maintained, have formed a  
series of the series in various kinds, Poems, Histories, and in the  
arts, Poetry, and Truth."

ADDRESS OF THE AMERICAN COPY RIGHT LAW

WILEY AND PUTNAM'S  
LIBRARY OF AMERICAN BOOKS.

NO. XXVII.

SUPERNATURALISM  
OF  
NEW ENGLAND.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

NEW YORK AND LONDON,  
WILEY AND PUTNAM, 151 BROADWAY, & WATERLOO PLACE.

Price, Twenty-five Cents.

(Above) Title-page of Whittier's *The Supernaturalism of New England*, apparently anonymous; and (below) the wrapper, giving Whittier as the author.



*Le Mouchoir* made in 1897, that both pamphlets were issued without covers. A supplementary statement might well have been added—indeed, the wording of the introduction to *Le Mouchoir* suggests that there was another form—for these are instances, like the wrapped copies of *Leaves of Grass* (1855), of which only three copies are known, in which second issues are infinitely more desirable than first.

*Le Mouchoir*, by the way, had the unique distinction of being published three times under different names. The full title of the first edition is, *Le Mouchoir: An Autobiographical Romance*; of the first English edition, also issued in 1843, *The French Governess; or the Embroidered Handkerchief*; and of the 1897 reprint, *Autobiography of a Pocket Handkerchief*, which was its original title when first serialized, in “Graham’s Magazine.” But with it all, the book seems never to have been included in any edition of Cooper’s novels!

Cooper is now one of the most collected of American authors, and there is a crying need for a sound bibliography of his works. But apart from other problems, the compiler of that will

have to solve the riddle of the bindings. And that will make his hair turn gray. When we find the novels uncut in boards, as the earlier ones are, or cut in half-boards and cloth, or cloth alone, as the later, and all with labels, then we know where we are. But some of those earlier volumes so frequently turn up either in full or half-leather and some of the later ones either in paper wrappers or, bound two volumes in one, in half-leather or cloth, that it is positively bewildering.

Were these books published simultaneously in various bindings or were they not? At that period many people had their books bound for them, sometimes from the untouched sheets, but between even the best of contemporary bindings and the publishers' own binding, there is a great gulf. In the case of the full and half-leather bindings one might come to conclusions if one could gather enough copies. An exact similarity of material, decoration and lettering would go far to prove that a publisher had put them out. But just try to find even half a dozen leather-bound copies, which are ever so much commoner than those in boards, of such works as *The Pio-*





New Novelle by Cooper.

---

**Le Mouchoir ;**  
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ROMANCE.

By J. Fenimore Cooper, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "THE SPY," "THE PILOT," "THE PIONEERS," "HOME AS FOUND,"  
"WING-AND-WING," "THE TWO ADMIRALS," &c.

---

New-York :

WILSON AND COMPANY, BROTHER JONATHAN PRESS.



*neers* (2 vols., 1823), *The Pilot* (2 vols., 1823) or *The Prairie* (2 vols., 1827) ! It simply can't be done. And yet that is the means by which the question may finally be answered.

One thing should always be remembered in regard to leather bindings: without proof to the contrary, such as complete uniformity between a number of copies of the same book—a set of the works might have been bound uniform by an owner—it is unwise to accept as a publisher's binding any in which the lettering on the spine is not neat and even. For the publisher—at least, the publisher of more modern days, for one does not know when the practice started and there's the rub as regards Cooper—has the lettering stamped from a properly cut brass, whereas a book bound specially for a client is usually lettered from moveable type.

Regarding books of Cooper which appeared in paper wrappers—*The Wing-and-Wing* (2 vols., 1842) seems to have been the first of them, though heaven save me from dogmatizing about Cooper bindings!—was that only a subsidiary form to match the current cheap edition of his novels or was it the real first binding? Let us

see what we actually know. Cooper's publishers, Lea & Blanchard, started to bring out a cheap edition of his novels in brown paper wrappers at only 25 cents a volume in the early 'forties. For some time his fresh books were added to this edition in the successive years of their publication. But it seems hardly probable that this type of binding, which made a new, full-length work by the most widely read of American novelists cost only 50 cents, was really the earliest. Surely they would have given at least a few months' run to a more expensive form; and yet some of these books seem never to appear in the usual two-volume cloth binding. But I dare say they exist, and if they do I would consider them the real first issues. As to those books by Cooper in which the two volumes are sometimes bound as one, they would be, even if in publisher's bindings, certainly no earlier than the wrapped copies.

Whether in the case of an early American author, like Cooper, we can ever arrive at the actual facts about all such matters is very dubious. I can but repeat that empirical methods are the only ones that promise anything and that a patient examination of many copies may yet

give us the truth. But the investigation is itself absorbing and actual victory is not the chief reward.

Of course, all these little complexities of bibliography which seem to multiply from day to day make it more and more impossible to know for certain every point about any American first edition, and practically impossible even to remember those that we do know. Some few people are born with a trap-like memory, one that draws in facts and never lets them escape, but no memory is so reliable as the written word, and the sensible plan is to make notes as one goes along. A very obvious piece of advice, but seldom heeded if one may judge from the results.

Why, in some individual books there are alone sufficient points to form a good test of memory and a regular lesson in applied detail. Consider Holmes's most celebrated work, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1858). First, the binding: most copies have four circles, one under the other, beneath the title on the back-strip; but very early copies have one other circle, above the title, and copies of the later states have no circles at all. The binding can be found in scarlet,

bright green, bright blue, black, olive, or brown; the first three colors are very rare, and the uncommonness of the last three is in the order given. (Perhaps I may here venture to remark that with the possible exception of Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851), *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* is about the ugliest-looking book that that period, which delighted in ugly books, managed to produce. It is a masterpiece of tastelessness.) Next, the end-papers: both the front and rear end-papers must consist of advertisements, and moreover the advertisement on the third end-paper must be headed "Poetry and the Drama" and on the fourth "School Books," and *not* "Miscellaneous" on both end-papers, as in the second state. In the third and later states the end-papers are blank. Next, the advertisements: there must *not* be a leaf of advertising matter following the index. Next, the preliminary matter: there must be an engraved title-page as well as a printed one. (We can surely omit the warning that the motto on the title-page must be in very small type: it has been going the rounds for years, but who ever saw a copy in which the motto-type was *not*

MOBY-DICK;  
OR,  
THE WHALE.

BY

HERMAN MELVILLE,

AUTHOR OF

"TYPEE," "OMOO," "REDBURN," "MARDI," "WHITE-JACKET."

---

NEW YORK:  
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS.  
LONDON: RICHARD BENTLEY.  
1851.





## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

minute?) Next, the text: the type on page 95, and, indeed, throughout the work, must be perfect.

So much for the ordinary edition; now for the edition on large paper. There were quite a number of these done for Holmes's own use, and one may note in passing that every known presentation copy of the first edition is on large paper. He gave, for instance, one to every member of his class at Harvard (1829) who was present at the class dinner on Jan. 6, 1859—twenty-nine of them. Although produced, like the ordinary copies, in 1858, they were dated 1859. Some examples contain the eight illustrations, some contain none, while the earliest examples (as already stated) have "Boston" on the back-strip and the later have "Ticknor & Co."

The *Autocrat* is one of the essential books in any comprehensive collection of American first editions, and this, taken in conjunction with the elaboration of its bibliography, has made it a regular target for the arrows of fakers and tamperers. Every copy requires to be "vetted" with the utmost thoroughness, for many collectors are now in the possession of *Autocrats* which, if they

only knew it, fail dismally to live up to expectations.

An even more celebrated American book, a book so sought after by collectors that its first edition has risen in value during the last ten years from about \$125 to about \$3,500, is Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855). And that is a book teeming with points. The very earliest issue, or, at any rate, the one taken as being the very earliest, must have gilt edges and a triple line in gilt around the borders of both the front and the back covers; the end-papers must be marbled; the title must be stamped in gold on both sides of the binding; the frontispiece must be on plain paper and not on India paper pressed on to plain. And, of course, the book must not contain the eight pages of "Press Notices" which appear, as stated in an earlier chapter, in the last issue of the first edition.

From the account of these two books it may be judged to what an extent bindings are of bibliographical significance. To rebind many a book is, in truth, to destroy the vital evidence as to issue. Or what is supposed to be the vital evidence. For if bibliographical knowledge is for-

ever being slowly built up like a living coral reef, it is also constantly being rapidly pulled down like an out-of-date hotel. In other words, it is harder to be constructive than destructive and both processes are going on at the same instant. No sooner does one expert announce a discovery than another expert not alone denounces that particular discovery, but the whole basis on which it is reared. And that is rather tiresome. All the same, one's best chance of getting anywhere is to be positive; and I, for one, enjoy those controversies in which men, holding diametrically opposite opinions, strive toward definite results in the hope of confounding their opponents.

## VI

Rare books still obtainable—Necessity for specialization—Hints to collectors of moderate means—Colors of bindings—Newspapers and magazines—Anonymous books and pamphlets—Sentiment in collecting—English first editions, real and otherwise—Second editions—Books of “association interest”—What authors to collect—“One-book” authors—*Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*—Reason for non-mention of certain rarities and common volumes—The true pleasure of collecting.

SINCE prices began to sky-rocket many of the books seem to have followed them and to have vanished off the face of the earth. This famine in the finer things and copies is what always happens under these conditions. But though dealers, speculators and collectors have swept the market, the tempting values keep bringing out unexpected rarities and one should never despair. On all sides we hear piteous stories of what could have been acquired a few years ago, but if we only know where to look there is plenty to acquire to-day.

Plenty. Undisturbed accumulations of books, going back fifty to a hundred years, must be lying snugly in many a substantial New England

# TAMERLANE

AND

## OTHER POEMS.

BY A BOSTONIAN.

Young heads are giddy, and young hearts are warm,  
And make mistakes for manhood to reform.—COWPER



**BOSTON:**

CALVIN F. S. THOMAS. ...PRINTER.

.....

**1827.**

Wrapper of Poe's *Tamerlane and Other Poems*. Including the above copy, which was not recorded until 1930, only seven copies are known, but four of which are in original wrappers.



home, while from the curious underworld of junk dealers and country auctions all sorts of treasures continue to float to the surface. And think of the innumerable farmhouses where there are shelves of dusty volumes or even forgotten boxes of them in attics. One learns every now and then of astonishing "finds"—within the last few years copies of Poe's *Tamerlane* (1827) and *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1843), which are about the two most valuable and desired books in American literature, have been unearthed from nowhere—and it is certain that there are many more to be made. But one must have patience. Pounce when the moment arrives, but wait for the moment. Around the next corner may lie the triumphant answer to a hope flickering to extinction, and the rarest books have a way of turning up when least expected.

Of course, it is painful to contemplate how many precious volumes get ruined before they are found, but what can one do? One cannot compel people to look after what they do not prize, and every neglected object disintegrates at last into its elements. Why, at this very instant there are probably at least a dozen mice,

throughout the length and breadth of the United States, nibbling away at a dozen priceless books. It is inconsiderate of them, no doubt, but their habits are primitive (like man's), and they will insist on making nests out of the nearest convenient substance. But there is this consolation: that if, say, a dozen degraded mice are now doing their worst, there are always at least ten thousand public-spirited mice helping to rid the world of useless books.

The collector of moderate means should never feel that his day is over. Bargains appear sooner or later, and though a library composed only of famous first editions is a reserve for the rich, it is possible, with knowledge and luck, to form cheaply a selective library which the rich would covet. Moreover, there are specialized lines of advanced collecting which have never yet been adequately explored and, in consequence, never yet financially exploited.

Indeed, unless one be very wealthy it is almost necessary to specialize nowadays. The only thing is to choose a branch that is not beyond one's means. The rich man may collect all the books of one or more authors and spend years



This is Hawthorne's  
Autograph  
S. R. Peck  
Feb 7th 1838

## Time's Portraiture.

Being the Carrier's Address to the Patrons  
of the Salem Gazette,  
for the first of January, 1838.

### Kind Patrons

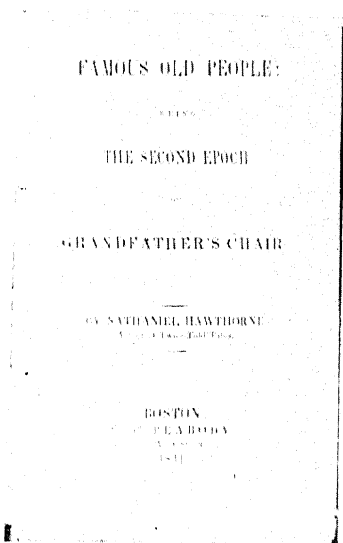
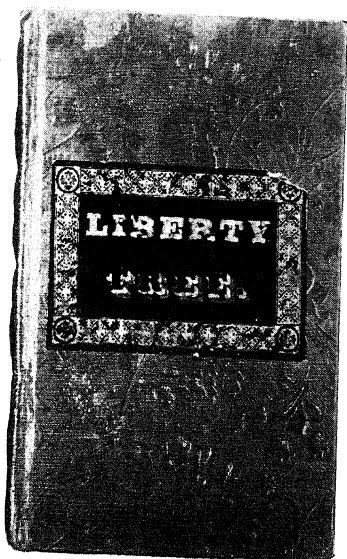
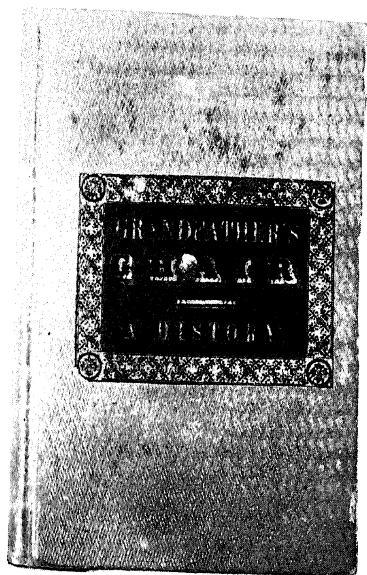
The new year's carriers are Time's second boys, and all  
the other count the old gentleman sends us from one of your doors to  
another, to get you know what he is to have about and what he is to  
do. We are a strange set of mechanics, for punctually on New  
Year's morning, one and all of us are seized with a fit of chafing,  
and break forth in such boldness of stream, that it would be no wonder  
if the instant year, with her staff upon the threshold were bright  
and shining by the disarray with which we strive to welcome a New  
Old Year's occasion, new generation. Patrons, you will be glad to give  
us a taste of your bounty; but whether as a reward for our wisdom  
or to purchase a respite from gentle infliction of suffering, is best  
known to your worshipful selves. Moreover, we have to thank  
you for our efforts, and feel it incumbent upon us, on the first day of  
every year, to present a sort of summary of our master's dealings  
with the world, throughout the whole of the preceding twelve  
months. Now it had so chanced, by a misfortune here to fore unbeknown  
of, that I, your present petitioner, have been artlessly forgotten  
by the Muse. Instead of being able (as I naturally expected) to  
measure my ideas into six-foot lines and tie a ribbon at each  
of their tails, I find myself, this blessed morning, the same sim-  
ple prosa that I was yesterday, and shall probably be to-  
morrow. And to my gentle mortification, being a humble-mi-  
nded little punier I shall nowise be capable of talking to your  
worships with the customary wisdom of my brethren, and giving  
sage opinions as to what Time has done right and what he has  
done wrong, and what of right or wrong he means to do here-  
after. Such being my unhappy predicament, it is with no small  
confusion of face, that I venture bold to present myself at your  
doors. Yet it were surely a pity, that my non-appearance should  
defeat your bountiful designs for the replenishing of my pockets. When  
fore I have thought me, that it might not do amiss, upon your  
shirts to have a few particulars about the person and habits of  
this Time; with whom, as being one of his errand-boys, I have

Only known portion of the original manuscript of Hawthorne's *Time's Portraiture* (1838), of which carrier's address but three copies are known.



in perfecting his sets; or he may concentrate on the outstanding works of the outstanding men; or he may indulge in "association" copies and autograph letters. (If I may interrupt this wealthy collector for a moment, let me point out that the "association" copy need not necessarily be a presentation. For example, Holmes wrote at the end of line 4 of page 23 of every copy of *Mechanism in Thought and Morals* (1871) which passed through his hands the important word "not," and at line 19 of page 22 of every copy of the scarce pamphlet (not the book) *Currents and Counter-Currents in Medical Science* (1860) changed "wrong" to "worrying." Almost every copy, also, of the special first issue, for the Centennial, of Whitman's *Two Rivulets* in the so-called "Author's Edition" of 1876 contains, in Whitman's writing, at line 14 of page 47, the word "witless" for "witness," and in the second paragraph of page 60 the line "long long ere the Second Centennial" in place of the printed "When the Hundredth year of this Union.") Or our collector of means may specialize in ephemera and nugæ, such as Hawthorne's "Addresses" (*Time's Portraiture*

(1838), *The Sister Years* (1839) and the reprinted *Time's Portraiture* (1853)) and children's booklets (*Grandfather's Chair*, *Famous Old People* and *Liberty Tree* (each 1841)), Longfellow's private issues (*The New England Tragedies* (1868), *Kéramos* (1877), *Bayard Taylor* (1879), etc.), Emerson's pamphlets *Concord Discourse* (1835), *Phi Beta Kappa Oration* (1837), *Divinity College Address* (1838), etc.), Whittier's many broadsides (*Our Countrymen in Chains* (1837), *A Tract for the Times! A Sabbath Scene* (1850), *Maud Muller* (1854), and others), and Holmes's leaflets (*To Christian Gottfried Ehrenberg* (Berlin, 1868)—perhaps the only American first edition of this period printed in Germany—*Harvard Sonnets* (1878), *James Russell Lowell* (1891), and innumerable others); or he may follow one favorite book from its very beginning right on, collecting it in its serial form, tracing its changes of text through all the American and English issues—books that grew incessantly like Bryant's *Poems* and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* are good instances—and gathering foreign translations and any edited, illus-



Covers of *Grandfather's Chair* and *Liberty Tree*, and title-page of *Famous Old People*—Hawthorne's children's booklets of 1841.



trated, or finely produced examples; or he may even go after books which hover upon the borderland of literature—the humorists, such as Artemus Ward, Bill Nye, Josh Billings and Petroleum V. Nasby; or “Dime Novels”; or the innumerable volumes and pamphlets that deal with the opening up of the Far West.

To carry out such aims with completeness is expensive. But, as I say, there are other and cheaper aims, and these may be indulged in with equal pleasure. The real gratification of collecting begins when one has mastered one’s subject and is hot on the trail; it sometimes finishes when one has achieved one’s end and spent one’s money. This is why so many collectors sell their libraries and start all over again, and this is why a man who may have very little spare money to lay out may yet have great happiness in laying it out.

What lines suggest themselves to the poor man? I will mention a few. Let him, for instance, try to form sets of the common later books of such writers as Longfellow, Whittier and Lowell in all the different shades in which they were bound. He will find that both amusing and, if he is that way inclined—and most of

us have to justify our unnecessary expenditures either to ourselves or to somebody else—probably remunerative. It is true that little attention so far has been paid to this aspect of collecting, and that only in the case of a few books, such as Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851) and Holmes's *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1858), do people concern themselves much about the color of the binding. (I have previously mentioned the colors of the *Autocrat*, and will therefore add here that *Moby-Dick* can be found in blue, red, black, or gray-green). Yet it will probably come, and one may as well forestall the rush and be early in the field.

And bibliographically speaking, these varieties, in given instances, may be less insignificant than they appear. Certainly some are scarcer than others, and that in itself is a collector's justification. For instance, Lowell's *Last Poems* (1895) is very common in green, less common in yellow-brown, and quite unusual in crimson. Similarly, Longfellow's *Kéramos* (1878) is generally found in terra-cotta, sometimes in green, and seldom in lavender-gray. Again, Whittier's *The Vision of Echarad* (1878) seems to appear more



often in olive-green or deep mauve than in terra-cotta.

Many of the books of the 'sixties and 'seventies were published in cloth of at least three colors—maroon, green, and terra-cotta. Typical examples are: Longfellow's *The New England Tragedies* (1868), *The Divine Tragedy* (12mo edition, 1871), *Three Books of Song* (1872) and *Aftermath* (1873); Whittier's *Among the Hills* (1869), *Miriam* (1871), *The Pennsylvania Pilgrim* (1872) and *Hazel-Blossoms* (1875); Lowell's *The Biglow Papers. Second Series* (1867) and *Under the Willows* (1869). It is not so very difficult or so very expensive to make up such runs, though it tends to become more difficult and, perhaps, more expensive all the time. But some, if not all, of these same books were also issued in four, if not five, shades, and these other shades are rare. Search for the books in brick or in a kind of putty; if you find them—and I do not say that they are all to be found thus—you have minor rarities.

It may be supposed, indeed, that nobody knows for sure in how many colors some of those Nineteenth Century American books appeared.

Longfellow's *The Hanging of the Crane* (8vo edition, 1875) can certainly be picked up in olive, blue, terra-cotta, and green; Lowell's *Three Memorial Poems* (1877) in lavender, blue, terra-cotta, and green; and Whittier's *The King's Missive* (1881) in puce, blue, brown, and gray—and maybe these numbers could be doubled. And other writers, such as Emerson, Hawthorne, Bryant, Melville and Holmes, also saw many of their books given out to the public in a range of colors that must have made them rub their eyes.

The whole thing, as I stated previously, was an advertising device. But the collector is not concerned with motives, only with results—and the result here *is* rather odd. As to its being trivial: yes, certainly it is trivial. But book-collecting even in its most exalted phases does not touch upon the Eternal Verities, and the degrees of its unimportance are relative to the point of view. *Au fond* it is unimportant in every phase, for its only true significance is, so to speak, the by-product of its power to please and interest a number of inoffensive people.

Another form of collecting, at once inexpensive and fascinating, is to gather the newspa-

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

pers and magazines in which so much of the work of the classic American authors first appeared. The output of these writers was voluminous and constant, and the periodicals of the time bear full witness to their industry. Whittier alone contributed to the press on something like three hundred occasions between 1828 and 1838; see the monograph of Frances Mary Pray, published only this year, *A Study of Whittier's Apprenticeship as a Poet, 1825-1835*, which lists over 160 poems (there were even more) for a part of the period. The great mass of these contributions has not been reprinted—and no wonder! As for a genius like Poe, he relied for his very living on the pathetically low payments of editors. But they all wrote for the magazines, Cooper, Hawthorne, Lowell, Holmes—how he wrote!—all of them, and much of their work has never been disinterred. Much, in all probability, has never even been discovered, and there is here a golden opportunity for the student-collector.

It has often been pointed out that if book-collectors were more logical—but who really governs his life on logic, anyhow?—there would be

a scramble for the periodicals in which famous works were first issued. For these, beyond question, are the first editions. But the demand for them, though not very keen, *is* increasing, and will increase still more as their bibliographical and textual significance is better appreciated. In any case, they have a romantic appeal of their own. The man of moderate means could do worse than devote his energy to this branch of collecting. For while it is true that complete runs of some magazines and papers, like "The Pioneer" or "The Southern Literary Messenger," are very scarce and valuable, yet it is frequently possible to pick up odd numbers of even the rarest of them, which, as far as their contents are concerned, are complete entities. The Riverside bibliographies of Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Holmes and Lowell, though mediocre as to the description of books, are on the whole excellent as to periodical publication; and armed with these works the collector will know to a large extent what to search for.

It is an inexhaustible pursuit. And it has its moments of particular triumph. Who would not be thrilled at finding "The New England Maga-

## BRAHMA.

If the red slaver think he slays,  
Or if the slain think he is slain,  
They know not well the subtle ways  
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near,  
Shadow and sunlight are the same,  
The vanished gods to me appear,  
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;  
When me they fly, I am the wings;  
I am the double and the single,  
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,  
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;  
But thou, meek lover of the good!  
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

## THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE.

## EVERY MAN HIS OWN BOSWELL.

I was just going to say, when I was interrupted, that one of the many ways of classifying minds is under the heads of arithmetical and algebraical intellects. All economical and practical wisdom is an extension or variation of the following arithmetical formula:  $2+2=4$ . Every philosophical proposition has the more general character of the expression  $a+b=c$ . We are more operatives, empirics, and egoists, until we learn to think in letters instead of figures.

They all stared. There is a divinity student lately come among us to whom I commonly address remarks like the above, allowing him to take a certain share in the conversation, so far as ascent or pertinent questions are involved. He abused his liberty on this occasion by presuming to say that Leibnitz had the same observation.—No, sir, I replied, he has not. But he said a mighty good thing about

mathematics, that sounds something like it, and you found it, *not in the original*, but quoted by Dr. Thomas Reid. I will tell the company what he did say, one of these days.

—If I belong to a Society of Mutual Admiration?—I blush to say that I do not at this present moment. I once did, however. It was the first association to which I ever heard the term applied; a body of scientific young men in a great foreign city who admired their teacher, and to some extent each other. Many of them deserved it; they have become famous since. It amuses me to hear the talk of one of those beings described by Thackeray—

"Let us four do form his name."

about a social development which belongs to the very noblest stage of civilization. All generous companies of artists, authors,

philanthropists, men ought to be. Socialization. A man of superior, is not the same quality other from returning may even associate to think highly of, at a dozen such it is fortunate enough. The being of the eternal false promises talent necessarily lightly, that infatuated association of persons whom a distance. They clever fellows, who, and have a good institutional compend and put down human race not better. Fourthly, the he is not asked to

Here the company dead, and the old positive said, "That?"

I continued, for, vain. As to cleverer, I think a little sometimes make people irritated by failures, and it has dispositions. (Un) is good, and gentle weak flavor of good common person is the grand neutral character, as the wineglass spoil a

No wonder the poet who always belongs by favored medicine vexed by the stream of capacity together in harm down are always familiarly natural they ever praise eings, or broken-winded verses, nobles was from admirer

VOL. I.



zine" for November, 1831, and February, 1832, containing the tentative beginnings of the *Autocrat*; or "The Knickerbocker Magazine" for May, 1839, containing J. N. Reynolds's "Mocha-Dick or the White Whale of the Pacific," which obviously suggested both a subject and a title to Melville; or "The American Anti-Slavery Almanac," for 1847 (though this is scarcely to be claimed as a periodical) with the first mention of Hosea Biglow; or "The Atlantic Monthly" for November, 1857, which on one page gives us the first printing of Emerson's "Brahma," not reprinted till it appeared in his volume of poems, *May-Day* (1867), and of the opening sentences of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* in the form in which we know it; or "The Atlantic Monthly" for February, 1862, with the first printing to Julia Ward Howe's poem, "Battle Hymn of the Republic," which is so absolutely unobtainable in the obscure pamphlet of 1862 which first sheltered it afterwards that most people believe that its appearance in her *Later Lyrics* (1866) was its initial printing in a book. And there is something strangely moving when, in the act of turning the pages of old publica-

tions like "The Yankee," "The New Mirror," or "Godey's Magazine," one lights upon poems or stories by Poe. His restless and enigmatic spirit seems to rise before one as in the flesh, and the darkness shrouding the past is suddenly lifted. Such is the influence of a contemporary record, however wretched the type and inferior the paper!

Wide knowledge counteracts narrow means, and to the collector who knows his subject opportunities are bound to occur. (If I have made this remark before it does no harm to repeat it.) Rare issues, in relation to their number, are just as frequently sold in error for common issues, as common are for rare; and if the sellers, making their own prices, do not know their business, that is their lookout. It is one thing to offer an ignorant person a ridiculous figure, it is another thing to accept the figure which a person who ought to know chooses to ask.

Again, there are many anonymous books and pamphlets by American writers, and not all of them are familiar even to the average dealer. Of course, nobody but a modern *Candide* expects to pick up a copy of Bryant's *The Embargo*,



ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF THE  
ATHENÆUM GALLERY  
OF  
PAINTINGS.

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BOSTON:  
PUBLISHED BY FREDERIC S. HILL.  
M DCCC XXX.

Title-page of *Illustrations of the Athenæum Gallery of Paintings* (Holmes' first book).



or *Sketches of the Times* (1808), or Cooper's first novel *Precaution* (2 vols., 1820), or Hawthorne's *Fanshawe* (1828), just because they are anonymous, but there are other anonymous works, valuable but more obscure, which are not beyond hope. To give a list would be rather like requesting the horse to leave the stable before one closes the door, but a great deal of the knowledge is scattered here and there and can be gained by the usual methods. A great deal, but not all. One of the charms of anonymous literature is the possibility of fresh discoveries. How many people, for instance, know that the anonymous pamphlet *Illustrations of the Athenæum Gallery of Paintings* (1830) may be called Holmes's first book, since out of its 18 poems, 10 are by him? The fact has been spread before them for years—first in that useful compilation of the industrious Rufus W. Griswold, *Poets and Poetry of America* (1842), which was copied in the prefatory matter to Holmes's *Poems* (London, 1846), although the date is given as 1831 instead of 1830—and yet the pamphlet has been absent from all the well-known collections except that of Chamberlain,

whose copy, with fitting propriety, went to fill what had hitherto been a gap in the shelves of the very Boston Athenæum whose "Gallery" it portrayed. Surely *The Harbinger* (1833)—also anonymous—in which Holmes wrote 17 poems out of 53, ought definitely to be dethroned as his first work.

The man who would be successful in book-collecting, as in other pursuits, must cease to be an amateur. He must first choose his field, according to his inclinations and his pocket, and in that field he must match his learning with the authorities and be able to stand on his own feet. Then, indeed, he is entitled to expect his share of good fortune; a thing, after all, which has much more to do with one's self than with mere luck.

Sentiment is one of the principal factors of book-collecting and must not be underestimated. Rare volumes, like Longfellow's *Voices of the Night* (1839) and *Ballads and Other Poems* (1842), will always be increasingly wanted, for the first contains such poems as "The Reaper and the Flowers," "A Psalm of Life" and "Hymn to the Night," and the second such poems as "The Wreck of the Hesperus," "The

The last leaf upon the tree  
In the spring,  
Let them smile as I do now  
At the old forsaken bough  
Where I cling.

Oliver Wendell Holmes,  
Boston Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> 1884.

(At. 22)

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving this outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Boston, December 9<sup>th</sup> 1884.

(At. 48.)

Autograph transcripts by Holmes of the concluding stanza from each of his two most famous poems, "The Last Leaf" and "The Chambered Nautilus" (on the fly-leaves of a copy of his collected poems presented by him to Edmund Gosse in 1884).



Village Blacksmith" and "Excelsior." So, too, will Holmes's *Poems* (1836) on account of "Old Ironsides" and "The Last Leaf," and Bryant's *Poems* (1821) on account of "Thanatopsis." And even relatively common books, like Whittier's *The Panorama* (1856) and *In War Time* (1864), tend to rise in value, because the one prints "The Barefoot Boy" and the other recounts the heroism of that mythical old lady, Barbara Frietchie. There are many such instances, and the collector with prescience can take the hint. And why is it that Longfellow's *The Golden Legend* (1851) is worth only about \$20.00, while the first issue (or edition) of his *Hiawatha* (1855) is worth about \$150.00? The answer is in the subject: the theme of the first is foreign and of the second American.

A like sentiment makes the collector prefer the first American edition of an American book even when the English edition precedes it. (Incidentally, in similar circumstances, he prefers the first English edition of an English book.) Take an instance: Melville's most memorable work, *Moby-Dick* (1851), was not only published under a different name in England, *The*

*Whale* (3 vols., 1851), but it was actually published earlier there than in the United States and is a much rarer book. Again going for our evidence to that well of information, the contemporary magazine, we find in "Harper's" for October, 1851, as a note to the title "The Town-Ho's Story" (the only portion of *Moby-Dick* published in magazine form) the following: "From *The Whale*. The title of a new work by Mr. Melville, in the press of Harper and Brothers, and now publishing in London by Mr. Bentley." It is interesting to observe that the rather haunting title, *Moby-Dick*, was apparently a last-minute inspiration. But though *The Whale* is valuable, for Melville and Poe are the two American authors whose first English editions are seriously collected, it is scarcely as valuable as the American edition. It lacks the appeal of sentiment.

With regard to Poe, even his commoner books are so scarce in the American editions that one may be thankful to find such works as *Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838), *The Raven* (1845) and *Tales* (1845) in the English editions of the same dates, although, of course, their value is not com-





E. M. W.

POEMS

BY

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

CAMBRIDGE :

PRINTED BY HILLIARD AND METCALF.

1821.

Cover of Bryant's *Poems* (1821).

"To live, that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan which moved  
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take  
His chance in the silent halls of Death;  
Thou go'st not, like the quarry slave at night,  
Scourged to his dungeon, but—disclaimed and doothed—  
By an unfettering trust, approach thy grave,  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch,  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

William Cullen Bryant.

Copied February 15, 1865.



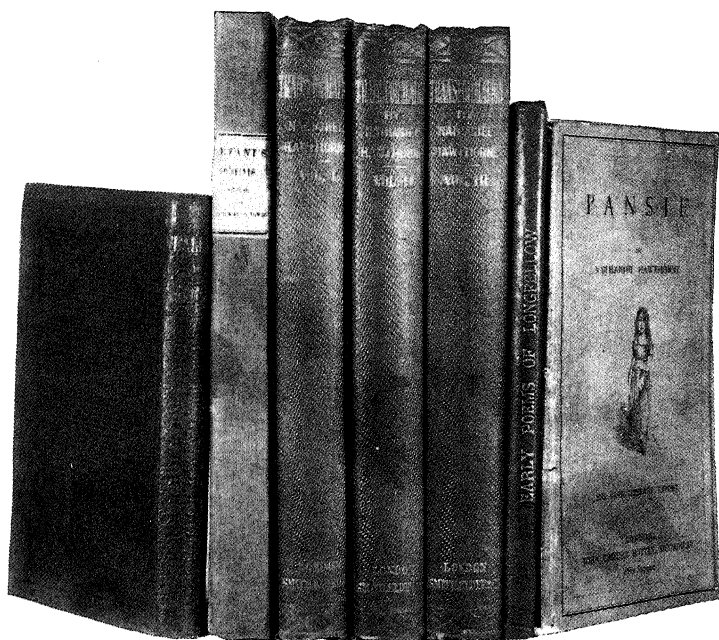
mensurate. Still it is distinctly high, and when we recollect that the second and third book are but the American sheets with English title-pages and binding, and that the text of the first book is considerably different from the text of the American edition—for example, Pym's diary ends on March 21 in the English edition and on March 22 in the American—we see that that value is justifiable, even apart from the special magic of Poe's name. It should be noted, by the way, that there was another English edition of the *Tales* in 1846, which has nothing, save the date, to show that it is not the first English edition.

Of course, there are exceptions to this rule of preference for the American printing. Many a collector would rather have the English edition of Bryant's *Poems* (1832) than the American edition, but then the English edition was edited by Washington Irving and so is of double significance. Again, a collector would probably have to pay more for the English edition, known as *Transformation* (3 vols., 1860), than for the American edition of Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* (2 vols., 1860), but that is due to

the cumulative influence of four factors: that three-volume novels are much collected, that the English edition is much scarcer than the American, that it has a different title, and that the American edition was set up from the English proof-sheets. (In the American edition, by the way, the first issue of the second volume has 284 pages, the second 288; similarly the third volume of the English edition was first published with 285 pages, and, finally, after readers had demanded a "Conclusion," with 292 pages.)

And naturally when the first English edition is the *only* first edition, as with Poe's *Mesmerism in Articulo Mortis* (1846), Hawthorne's *Pansie: A Fragment* (1864)—this booklet was a double piracy, for not only was the Hawthorne material unauthorized, but the publishers reprinted without permission, as an introduction, Holmes's essay on Hawthorne that had appeared in "The Atlantic Monthly" for July, 1864—*The Early Poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (1878), Lowell's *On Democracy* (1884)—but why labor the obvious?

And yet with all this I believe that the American visitor to England might put in lucrative



English first printings of American authors—(from left to right) Whittie ,  
Bryant (and Irving), Hawthorne, Longfellow, Hawthorne (and Holmes).





hours searching for the first English editions of outstanding American books. Let him especially keep his eye open for such books actually carrying earlier dates than do the American first editions of them. It is very probable that he may thus make interesting discoveries, as may well be assumed when I mention that the first English editions of books as well-known as Cooper's *The Red Rover* and *The Water Witch*, Hawthorne's *The Snow Image* and *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books*, Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and Holmes's *Over the Teacups* are all dated one year earlier (1827, 1830, 1851, 1871, 1881, 1884 and 1890, respectively) than are the first American editions. The books were published simultaneously in each country, in the latter months of the year. American custom, however, then dictated that the literary Christmas present should have a fictitious freshness even into the New Year, and therefore post-dated its title-page; England, more honest as to title-pages, stuck to the true date of publication. But, of course, sentiment often triumphs over logic, and col-

lectors will always hanker after the earliest-dated editions.

An absolutely correct instance of earlier English publication is presented by Lowell's *Biglow Papers. Second Series*, which appeared three times in England prior to its appearance in America in 1867. It was first published in London in three little volumes in 1862, and again in one volume in 1864 and 1865, each printing adding matter not in the previous editions. The three thin wrapped pamphlets—they are little more—of 1862 are among the prizes of American first editions of this period; and obviously these particular waifs are far more apt to lurk on the other side. I may add that the 1864 volume, also, is no small acquisition—it consists of the 1862 sheets, minus the three original title-pages and plus a new general title-page and contents leaf, and with 13 added pages at the end. And, as happens with such malignant persistency among books by American authors that are rare enough in any shape, this 1864 volume is found in two issues, the first with an imprint on pages 52 and 90, and the second without such imprint.

A similar instance occurs in Emerson. His *Nature; Addresses and Lectures* (1849) is of importance to collectors as the first gathering into book form of those orations between 1837 and 1844 which so greatly stimulated American thought and, as I have stated, are so difficult to obtain in their original separate wrapped printings. But it is not generally known that the collection really appeared first in England, under the title *Nature: an Essay. To which is Added, Orations, Lectures and Addresses* (1845). The English edition omits three minor addresses, which had no separate existence in wrappers, and are printed in the 1849 edition, but includes all the more famous ones.

Furthermore, some English first editions of American books have unique points of sentiment and interest about them. Read, for example, this pathetic "Notice" which is printed on the wrapper of the first English edition, 1858, of Longfellow's *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858):—

"In order to protect this volume from the fate of previous American publications, viz., an instant appropriation on the part of an unlim-

ited number of English publishers, a small but sufficient portion of the contents has been contributed by an English writer. Any publisher, therefore, who reprints this book without the consent of the Author, will render himself liable to the penalties attendant on a wilful infringement of copyright."

Pathetic, indeed, and rather futile, for presumably that "unlimited number" of piratically-minded English publishers could have got round the difficulty in due course by sending to the United States for copies not containing the "small but sufficient portion" added by their anonymous fellow-countryman.

Another English edition of an American book which prints an arresting note by the English publisher is Holmes's *Poems* (1846). This was the only volume of the Autocrat's poems to appear between the American editions of 1836 and 1849, and it has nine poems not in the volume of 1836. Thus it takes rank as a real first edition. The note reads—

"This volume contains all of Dr. Holmes's poems published in the last Boston edition. Those which follow 'The Hot Season,' on page 141, are here collected for the first time from Magazines and other sources, available

to the English Editor; who has also added a short Memoir of the Author from Griswold's *Poets and Poetry of America*."

But there is another point of interest about this volume which should make it particularly dear to the American collector. Some of the sheets were evidently sent over to be bound in America, for the copy I am holding in my hands, although printed in London (as described on the back of the title-page and on the back of the last page of the text), contains a four-page list of Ticknor & Company's advertisements dated January 1, 1846. This list is headed "Boston" and is entirely American in its mention of dollars and cents. The volume has also a little book-label on the inside of the cover, which reads "Sold by Ticknor & Co., 135 Washington St., Boston." Furthermore, its binding of brown boards and paper label on the very top of the spine is absolutely typical of American books of that period, although, with that exasperating irrelevancy which so often mars the neatness of a bibliographical demonstration, the label carries a price in shillings. How the English edition for the English market was bound I cannot say,

as the copy at the British Museum has been rebound; but in its American dress Holmes's *Poems* of 1846 in boards is to most outward seeming an American book. And, curiously enough, when bound in cloth the book carries "Ticknor & Co." at the base of the spine, but the so-called "presentation" binding, from precisely the same die but much begilded, reads "London."

Again, since Americans collect such books as Holmes's *The One Hoss Shay* (1892) and *Dorothy Q* (1893), although they are not first editions, on account of Howard Pyle's illustrations, why should not sentiment also lead them to collect those many different volumes of Longfellow reprinted in England during the 'fifties which were illustrated by that charming and accomplished artist, Birket Foster?

In truth, up to a point all such volumes *are* wanted, and though the collector *may* be asked high prices for some of them, he *may* get them for next to nothing. England, it can be said, used even to be a happy hunting ground for the first American editions of famous American authors—most of the New England writers had

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

many English friends and affinities—but those days are practically over. The English book-sellers have grown pretty wide-awake, and when they are not sure of a price they frequently err in the wrong direction. However, England, too, can still produce its American bargains. The other day I bought in a London bookshop an uncut copy in unlettered wrappers—the only copy in this precise state I have either seen or heard of—of Lowell's *Biglow Papers* (1848) for a sum which might drive an envious man to despair. This copy, which contains several more blank leaves than do the copies in cloth, was presumably sent over there with the idea of finding a publisher or getting a review. It has now returned whence it came and its long oblivion is over.

A variety of reasons, also, of which sentiment is by no means the least, frequently directs the collector to the second edition of many of the works we are discussing. For one thing, the first edition may be absolutely unattainable. Many a book-lover is contented with Bryant's *The Embargo* (1809), knowing well that he will probably never set eye on the first edition of 1808,

much less possess it. If he cannot discover Holmes's pamphlet *The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever* (1843), he finds comfort in *Puerperal Fever, as a Private Pestilence* (1855), which prints the earlier essay, with many added pages of matured reflection. His set of Irving's *Salmagundi* (1807-8) is not disfigured because one or two of the numbers have "Second Edition" at the top of the first page, for he knows better than to seek the impossible. Melville's *Typee* (1846) is now so scarce that he can take pride in the "Revised Edition" of the same year. Whittier's *Justice and Expediency* (1833) marks the turning-point in the poet's life, and therefore must be in his collection; but where there are only two copies known in private hands of the first edition, printed at Haverhill, the immediate New York reprint of the same year, by the American Anti-Slavery Society, will suffice. This New York reprint, by the way, comes in two forms, the one ending in a poem entitled "Decision," the other in an announcement of "The Emancipator." It is practically certain that the "poem" form is the earlier; it contains Whittier's name in heavier



type on the title-page, misplaces two pages of text, and has misprints on pages 56 and 58—all of which are corrected in the “Emancipator” form.

Again, a second edition may have some peculiar relation to the author’s life or work which gives it value to the collector. There is no particular thrill to be derived from the contents of Longfellow’s *Elements of French Grammar . . . Second Edition* (1831), but it happens to be the first book carrying his name on a title-page, and is therefore desirable. (The second edition of Bryant’s *The Embargo* (1809) is also the first work bearing his name.) There is a distinct thrill, however, from the second edition, in 1862, of Thoreau’s *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*. (I have previously discussed whether this be not in truth a second issue.) Its owner is handling one of the 705 copies of the 1849 first edition which, instead of being sold to the trade, were returned to Thoreau, and were in his possession till he died—stored in his home and possibly touched by him.

Finally, the second edition may contain so much added matter as to rank, in effect, as a first

edition. Well-known examples are Longfellow's *Outre-Mer* (2 vols., 1835) and Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* (2 vols., 1842), in both of which the entire second volume is new, containing sketches and stories not found in the first editions of 1833-4 and 1837, respectively. The clearest case, however, is the second edition of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1856), a book whose real scarcity, in anything approaching good condition, has only lately been appreciated. This second edition has more than twice as much material as the sought-after first edition of 1855, some 20 poems being first printed here. But this is not all. On July 21, 1855, Emerson, having just read *Leaves of Grass*, had written to Whitman his famous letter—probably the most enthusiastic letter of appreciation one genius ever wrote to another—with its prophetic sentence: "I greet you at the beginning of a great career." Whitman, either in 1855 or in 1856, struck off the letter as a broadside; two copies survive. But he did not stop there: blazoned at the foot of the back-strip of this second edition, crowding out any publisher's imprint, appear the same words, in gilt,

"I greet you at the beginning of a great career. R. W. Emerson." It is stated that Emerson was not so pleased with this second edition. (And why the bibliographical fuss about the leaf of advertisement in this book? Is it ever not present?)

The man with little money at his disposal can hardly hope to acquire volumes inscribed by their authors, or letters from them dealing with their work. Still less can he hope to acquire, as my friend, Mr. W. T. H. Howe, did at the Wakeman sale so recently as 1924, presentation copies galore of their rarest books from famous American authors to famous American authors. That was the chance of a lifetime, and looking back it is difficult to believe that only one man had the vision to grasp it in a large way. In the light of to-day the prices were quite negligible, as may be judged from the fact that the sensation of the sale was the unheard-of bid of \$4,200 for the copy of *The Raven* (1845) presented by Poe to Elizabeth Barrett Barrett [Browning], to whom the volume was dedicated. (See the frontispiece.) Mr. Howe told me that several people informed him that he must have been "crazy" to

pay such a price for the volume; but as he has since been vainly offered \$25,000 for it, the laugh remains with him.

No, the ordinary collector cannot hope to acquire such things, and I feel rather apologetic at this "Wakeman interlude." Still it is sometimes pleasant to recall the past and it gives one moreover an opportunity to moralize. But if great treasures are beyond him, yet he *can* acquire volumes of some "association interest"—what a quaint expression that is!—by picking up books that once belonged to renowned collectors and by buying short notes by writers like Longfellow and Holmes, whose fecundity as correspondents was almost alarming. All this can be done at trifling outlay. And remember that, though the briefest letter by Hawthorne will cost much, yet a customs-house document signed by him at Salem, of which hundreds exist, will cost little—and yet is the ideal adornment for *The Scarlet Letter* (1850). Again, volumes with the book-plate or book-label of such collectors as Holden, Wallace, Maier, Chamberlain and Wakeman are quite common—I bought for a mere song, the one from a book-seller, the other

**District of Salem and Beverly.**

**To the Inspectors of the Port of Salem:**

**WE CERTIFY THAT**

*J. Perry* has secured the Duties on Merchandise contained in the following packages, in conformity to the entry thereof of this date, which merchandise was imported in the

*Perry* Master, from

Permission is accordingly hereby given to land the same, viz :

*After Goods 1846 -  
See Book "Records"*

*Wm. H. Miller*  
*Wm. H. Miller* Collector.  
NAVAL OFFICER.



## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

at auction, the two rare editions of 1864 and 1869 of Bryant's *Hymns* (both editions are undated, and the only textual difference between them is a few altered words on page 9), each containing the J. C. Chamberlain book-plate; and such happy coincidences whet the appetite—while the more colorless letters of several distinguished American authors can be had in cheap abundance, though when placed at the beginning of volumes by them of the same date they add decidedly to their interest.

One might link up to this branch of collecting the acquisition of books from the libraries of American authors. Most of those libraries have been dispersed, with the exception of that belonging to Holmes, which his son, the aged Justice of the Supreme Court, keeps intact with filial piety, and it is not difficult to acquire cheaply volumes of more or less obscurity containing signatures of celebrities or presentation inscriptions to them couched in flattering terms. Sometimes the volumes may even be annotated, and Mark Twain, in particular, delighted to scrawl witty remarks on the margins.

To sense the trend of the times and to foresee

the future is the greatest help of all to the collector who must count his dollars. Startling bargains depend nine times out of ten on judging correctly what will have happened a year from now, and on feeling that something imponderable in the atmosphere which tells of change. The collecting flair is a mixture of developed instinct and critical perception. It is a very useful thing to possess, because, though a man may have no intention of selling his books however high they go, he certainly does want to buy them as cheap as he can. In connection with this it must never be forgotten that no author is going to be collected for long who is not either an original creator or in some special way representative. Throughout these pages I have carefully avoided the temptation to indulge in criticism, for that is not my province, yet the point will be made clearer if we now consider some examples from the past.

Genius speaks for itself, and the high and individual gifts of writers like Poe, Hawthorne, Melville and Whitman would be unmistakable anywhere and would give them a position in any country. With men of that stature the problem



resolves itself readily, for we do not need to look for secondary reasons. It is when we come to less remarkable figures that we have to analyze the cause of their lasting popularity. Why, for instance, are the first editions of Charles Brockden Brown's novels—*Wieland* (1798), *Ormond* (1799), and *Edgar Huntley* (3 vols., 1801) are typical examples—to-day so eagerly sought for? By almost general consent they are appallingly bad, but then Brown was the first American novelist and the curiosity about him is historical rather than literary. James Fenimore Cooper, on the other hand, is a capital story-teller, despite an irresistible tendency to make his Indians and frontiersmen speak with the stilted grandiloquence of a debating club, but his true fame is bound up with his central theme—the last stand of the Red Men in the East, the picture of a primitive life that has gone for ever. Then there are the poets. Neither Longfellow nor Whittier was even a good poet as judged by the standards of the grand manner, but their national popularity has to do with something other than æsthetics. Longfellow's mellifluous verses touched a familiar chord of

sentiment in a million American homes, and, by repetition and because of their simple rhythm, his most popular lines have achieved the influence of an institution. As to Whittier, he so typifies the old New England that his unaffected writings seem almost autochthonous and have given him a place apart in the instinctive conscience of the American people.

And so we might go on from writer to writer, seeking the explanation of an appeal which is not fully apparent from a mere perusal of their works. Of course, it could be argued that whenever an author is collected a reason for it can readily be found, but that does not invalidate my original contention. Nobody *is* collected for any length of time without some good cause, and the prophet must look behind the mask and discover whether there be such a cause.

Which brings us to the question, who are the best authors to collect? I am not talking about the moderns, whose names are on everybody's lips, or even about the semi-moderns, such as Bret Harte, Joaquin Miller, James Whitcomb Riley, Ambrose Bierce, Stephen Crane, Lafcadio Hearn and O. Henry—these fall outside of the

limits I have set myself—I am talking about the writers of that earlier age I have been discussing all along. Poe, of course, comes first, but as the rarer Poes are impossible, he may be omitted. To think of collecting Poe complete gives one as dream-like a sensation as to read him. But it is safe to collect everything, in fine state, of Irving, Cooper and Melville, while even the later books of Hawthorne and Thoreau are rising in value. With Longfellow, Emerson, Whittier and Holmes one should be more selective, while it is approximately accurate to say that Bryant is losing favor and Lowell gaining it. As to Whitman, it seems probable that the later editions also of *Leaves of Grass* will be more and more sought after.

This discussion has taken on a financial bias, and in this respect it is worth while noting that the very expensive books are probably the most satisfactory investments of all. They have gained an undisputed place as key-books in American literature, and thus they weather changes of fashion and are increasingly desired as the years go on. Each one of the authors I have mentioned has several such books to his credit, but

there are other authors of the period who wrote at least one book that has made them famous. These "one-book" authors were usually extremely prolific, but when one thinks of such names as Dana, Ik Marvel, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Edward Everett Hale, Leland, Louisa M. Alcott, Aldrich, Stockton, Lew Wallace, Joel Chandler Harris, and Howells, one thinks immediately of *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840), *Reveries of a Bachelor* (1850), *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (2 vols., 1852), *The Man without a Country* (1865), *Hans Breitmann's Party* (1868), *Little Women* (2 parts, 1868-9), *The Story of a Bad Boy* (1870), *Rudder Grange* (1879), *Ben-Hur* (1880), *Uncle Remus* (1881), and *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885). And these books, too, are safe purchases, because the reason of their popularity is bound up with some powerful sentiment in the public mind that has made them stand out prominently from the other productions of their authors. Time winnows and sifts, and most writers are not even remembered by one book. And so much the better, as a rule.

One of the most American of all writers, whose

creative genius seems all the more startling through its lack of self-criticism, was Mark Twain. His works are now in that interesting bibliographical stage where the points are being hotly disputed. As far as one can make out, the first issue of the first edition of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) must have the following: 8 preliminary leaves instead of 6 as in the second issue, the versos of the half-title and the preface blank, perfect type at the foot of the first page of text, and a thinner and more highly calendered paper than in the second issue. The first issue of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) appears to be even more complex; the last numeral on page 155 is either missing or in a different font—it is said that if a copy could be found with the “5” of the same font as the “15” *that* would be the first issue, provided the other points were present—page 283 is pasted in on a stub, the illustration, “Him and another man,” is announced in the list of contents as on page 88 and not as on page 87, and there is a misprint “was” for “saw” on line 23 of page 57. Curiously enough, both of these books were first published in England, the interval being six months

for *Tom Sawyer* and a mere three days for *Huckleberry Finn*; these three days, however, came in December, 1884, and the title-page of the American book was post-dated 1885 in accordance with the usual custom of that period. The 1884 on the title-page of the English *Huckleberry Finn* is therefore a true date, but the collector should not be misled by it—that is, unless he is interested in that three-days' priority. And so the fact emerges that, while a difference of dates may signify nothing, a similarity of dates may conceal a difference.

I have given these details of those two Mark Twain books because, in their probable lack of finality, they suggest a line of research to the collector. In a year or so all sorts of new points, not merely to do with Mark Twain's books but with those of earlier writers supposed to be finally settled, will assuredly be discovered. Without doubt some discoveries of this sort are being made even as this book goes through the press. And all new discoveries mean new adjustments, and many new adjustments mean new values. Research has its material compensations, quite



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CONTAINING

Among many Surprising and Curious Matters, the Unutterable  
Ponderings of WALTER THE DOUBTER, the Disastrous  
Projects of WILLIAM THE TESTY, and the Chivalric  
Achievements of PETER THE HEADSTRONG, the three  
Dutch Governors of NEW AMSTERDAM; being the only  
Authentic History of the Times that ever hath been, or ever  
will be Published.

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BY DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER.

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De waerheit is in onzer lag.  
Die leuen mit Maerlijn aan den dag.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

---

VOL. I.

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PUBLISHED BY INSKEEP & BRADFORD, NEW YORK;  
BRADFORD & INSKEEP, PHILADELPHIA; WM. M'IL-  
HENNEY, BOSTON; COALE & THOMAS, BALTIMORE;  
AND MORFORD, WILLINGTON, & CO. CHARLESTON.

1809.



185  
 amiable, and this is one of the sweetest in the world.  
 In the days of Adam, have perhaps been the unhappiest of  
 the human race; and these divisions that introduce lust, and  
 make it necessary to seek in any and every thing  
 that any thing is vanity, and vexation of spirit.  
 which enters in knowing what we ought to be miserable  
 this is the very spirit of true wisdom, and will discover much  
 about the pains time with that insupportable first, the impression  
 that "every thing is vanity and vexation of spirit," in consequence  
 of which page description you will never have been the  
 unhappiest of the human race; it being an insupportable mark  
 of true wisdom, for it is necessary to know that we are  
 miserable, and to be must be thus said who can be true  
 and advanced to the very hour of probability.  
 In turning to the 'inquiry' we have just advanced, we find  
 that the Colony of New Netherlands, which under the reign of  
 the renowned Van Ruler, had flourished in such alarming  
 and fatal plenty, is now paying for its prosperity, and dis-  
 charging the long bill of happiness enormous debt of comfort,  
 which it contracted. Does it happen it is away into some  
 distant quarters; the city of New Amsterdam, which yet in its  
 infancy is kept in constant alarm; and its select Command-  
 ers William the Testy answers the vulgar, but ~~un-  
 happy~~ saying  
 of "a man in a bed of troubles."



apart from the exhilaration of making bibliographical history.

Within the narrow limits of my plan I have now covered, or, rather, skimmed over, the subject of collecting American first editions. I say "narrow limits" advisedly, because even within the period I have chosen there are many other figures I might have touched on, figures like Simms, Bayard Taylor, Willis, Motley and Fitz-Greene Halleck, to name only a few, and because even with the authors I have written about I have omitted to discuss, in nearly every case, some of their rarest productions. It may well seem bizarre that in a work of this sort there should hitherto have been no faintest mention of such rarities as Irving's *A History of New York* (2 vols., 1809), Bryant's *An Oration, Delivered at Stockbridge, July 4th, 1820* (1820), Cooper's *The Spy* (2 vols., 1821), Emerson's *Letter from the Rev. R. W. Emerson, to the Second Church and Society* (1832), Whittier's *The Song of the Vermonsters* (1833)—of which there are two issues, the first a folio broadside, and the second a four-page quarto—Haw-

thorne's *Peter Parley's Universal History* (2 vols., 1837), Poe's *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (2 vols., 1840), Holmes's *Songs of The Class of MDCCCXXIX* (1854), Longfellow's *Noël* (1864), Lowell's *Commemoration Ode* (1865), Whitman's *Memoranda during the War* (1875-6), Melville's *Clarel* (2 vols., 1876)—although decidedly rare, these two volumes of Melville's poetry are by no means so scarce as his *John Marr* (1888) and *Timoleon* (1891), of both of which only 25 copies were printed; but then they are mere booklets, while, moreover, *Clarel* is peculiarly interesting (from a collector's angle) on account of the variety of its bright cloth bindings—and Mark Twain's *1601* (1882), of the original of which only three copies appear to be known, though no book has been more piratically reprinted, one suspects with the author's whole-hearted approval.

Were it not for the cumbrous, and even frightful, length of the last sentence, I would have liked to add to it various other works which, for sheer rarity, can scarcely be matched. Without launching into another expansive list, there occur to my mind such impossible trifles as Bryant's *Popular*

*Considerations on Homœopathia* (1841), Whittier's *The Sycamores* (1857), and Lowell's *Mason and Slidell: A Yankee Idyll* (1862)—but let us forbear; after all, the purpose of this work is not to excite vain envy, but to encourage reasonable hope. Speaking broadly, the more inaccessible a volume is, the less object had I in writing about it; although, of course, I have endeavored to give a survey of the whole field. This is a guide to collecting, not a complete list of books to be collected, and there are numerous productions, both scarce and common, which have received no notice.

For example, I have mentioned some of the great rarities which I have neglected to discuss; but the observing reader will similarly note a failure to mention such more ordinary books as Bryant's *Letters of a Traveller* (1850); Cooper's *The Heidenmauer* (2 vols., 1832), *The Monikins* (2 vols., 1835), (although no book of Cooper's is easily come by in good condition); Emerson's *Society and Solitude* (1870) and *Letters and Social Aims* (1876); Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* (1852); Holmes's perhaps deservedly neglected *The Guardian Angel*

(1867) and certainly undeservedly neglected *Songs of Many Seasons* (1875); Irving's *Wolfert's Roost* (1855) and *The Life of Washington* (5 vols., 1855-9); Longfellow's *Ultima Thule* (1880) and *In the Harbor* (1882); Lowell's *Among My Books* (1870); Melville's *Redburn* (1849) and *The Piazza Tales* (1856)—but all first editions of Melville are pretty scarce; Thoreau's *A Yankee in Canada* (1866); Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* (1896), and many others; Whitman's *Specimen Days and Collect* (1882-3) and *November Boughs* (1888); and Whittier's *The Chapel of the Hermits* (1853), and *Literary Recreations and Miscellanies* (1854). The list, unlike most statements of this sort, could in truth be greatly prolonged. The reason for the omission of these, and other, books is in some cases lack of knowledge, in other cases because their bibliography presents, so far as is yet known, neither snare nor problem, and in other cases, again, because they do not fit into any particular corner of my plan. One cannot deal with every book; my work, I emphasize, is

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

not a catalogue; it only aims to point out gins for the ignorant and prizes for the initiate.

But though the limitations of the work are inherent in its scope, I trust that in what I have done I have demonstrated both the pitfalls and the pleasures of collecting these American first editions. Well, perhaps I have said more about the pitfalls than the pleasures, save in so far as they have emerged unconsciously; but then the pitfalls are easy to write of, whereas the pleasures are, in a sense, incommunicable. They steal upon one imperceptibly, they gain an entrance against the very dictates of reason; and once they have got hold they never let go. The book-collector, surrounded by his first editions, finds a refuge from the stress and turmoil of the modern world. His library is a sort of oasis peopled by a living silence; all about him the illustrious dead stand ready to whisper in his ear. Here are the volumes they handled themselves, here are the books in which they first gave to fortune the cloistered thoughts of their creation.

In gazing at his serried rows the collector satisfies the mingled instincts of romance, of possession, of victory, of escape, and of warm com-

## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

panionship. But, of course, it is only a certain type of mind that will receive these reactions in this manner, and many persons are not alone unable to appreciate the appeal of rare books but are derisive on the subject of those who do appreciate it. It comes from the old idea that collectors know more about the outside of their books than about the inside, and are a species of lunatic concerned *only* with trifles. That idea has long since been exploded, but some people have not yet heard the explosion. And anyhow book-collectors are indifferent, for they are sufficient to themselves. It is they who form the true Secret Society of to-day: armed with the password of their common enthusiasm they gravitate instinctively together and, oblivious to the scoffing multitude, exchange confidences in a language almost incomprehensible to the outsider.

There has been much pleasant writing about the solace of collecting first editions, but how is one to explain convincingly the charm of an esoteric cult? The great thing to remember is that, while collecting raises a wall against the worries and anxieties of every-day existence, it also razes



## COLLECTING AMERICAN FIRST EDITIONS

the barrier that divides man from man. Book-collecting has its disappointments, but the happiness of getting to know other collectors is something that cannot be spoiled. The genial hospitality and downright friendliness of amateur and dealer alike (for the dealer is often a collector at heart) are surely a heritage derived from books. Despite the popular notion, the envy collectors feel for one another has nothing to do with jealousy. The true collector would rather see a rare volume in another man's possession than not see it at all, and next to his own acquisitions he rejoices in the acquisitions of his friends. For the mellow wisdom and wise tolerance of books seep, little by little, into the soul of even the most hardened individual. Is not that the best excuse of all for book-collecting?

THE END



## INDEX OF AUTHORS AND BOOKS

*Authors are indexed alphabetically, their books according to date of publication, though different editions of the same work, if similarly entitled, are grouped together. Abbreviated titles have been freely used where suitable. For purposes of simplification, no issue or edition other than the first is specifically indexed (save the English) unless the date be different, and even so only those later editions are indexed which are of interest to collectors. Neither periodicals, nor works of reference, nor authors whose books are not actually mentioned are indexed.*

Alcott, Louisa May

*Little Women* (1868-9), 204

Aldrich, Thomas Bailey

*Story of a Bad Boy* (1870),  
204.

Brown, Charles Brockden

*Wieland* (1798), 201.

*Ormond* (1799), 201.

*Edgar Huntley* (1801), 201.

Bryant, William Cullen

*Embargo* (1808), 180-1, 193;  
second edition (1809), 193-  
4, 195.

*Oration at Stockbridge*  
(1820), 207.

*Poems* (1821), 58, 172-3, 183;  
enlarged edition (1832), 66;  
English edition (1832), 185.

*Popular Considerations on*  
*Homœopathy* (1841),  
208-9.

*Fountain* (1842), 58.

Bryant, William Cullen

*White-Footed Deer* (1844),  
59.

*Letters of a Traveller* (1850),  
209.

*Forest Hymn* (1860), 136.

*Thirty Poems* (1864), 144-5.

*Hymns* (1864), 199; second  
edition (1869), 199.

*Song of the Sower* (1871), 60.

Cooper, James Fenimore

*Precaution* (1820), 181.

*Spy* (1821), 207.

*Pilot* (1823), 161.

*Pioneers* (1823), 160-1.

*Lionel Lincoln* (1825), 122-4.

*Last of the Mohicans* (1826),  
62.

*Prairie* (1827), 161.

*Red Rover*, English edition  
(1827), 187; American edi-  
tion (1828), 187.

# INDEX OF AUTHORS AND BOOKS

Cooper, James Fenimore

*Water Witch*, English edition (1830), 187; American edition (1831), 187.

*Heidenmauer* (1832), 209.

*Monikins* (1835), 209.

*Pathfinder* (1840), 123.

*Mercedes of Castile* (1840), 125-6.

*Deerslayer* (1841), 105, 124-5.

*Wing-and-Wing* (1842), 161.

*Mouchoir* (1843), 158-9.

*French Governess* (1843), 159.

*Jack Tier* (1848), 137.

Dana, Richard Henry

*Two Years before the Mast* (1840), 149-51, 204.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo

*Letter to the Second Church* (1832), 207.

*Concord Discourse* (1835), 172.

*Nature* (1836), 100, 143.

*Phi Beta Kappa Oration* (1837), 172.

*Divinity College Address* (1838), 172.

*Essays* (1841), 147, 148.

*Essays: Second Series* (1844), 89.

*Nature: an Essay* (1845), 189.

*Poems* (1847), 50, 58, 64-5; English edition (1847), 64-6.

*Nature: Addresses and Lectures* (1849), 189.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo

*Representative Men* (1850), 10.

[Letter to Whitman] (1855 or 1856), 196.

*English Traits* (1856), 11, 148.

*Conduct of Life* (1860), 10, 22-6, 145.

*May-Day* (1867), 90, 179.

*Society and Solitude* (1870), 209.

*Letters and Social Aims* (1876), 209.

Hale, Edward Everett

*Man without a Country* (1865), 204.

Harris, Joel Chandler

*Uncle Remus* (1881), 204.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel

*Fanshawe* (1828), 181.

*Peter Parley's History* (1837), 208.

*Twice-Told Tales* (1837), 5, 147; complete edition (1842), 196.

*Time's Portraiture* (1838), 171-2; new edition (1853), 172.

*Sister Years* (1839), 172.

*Grandfather's Chair* (1841), 172.

*Famous Old People* (1841), 172.

*Liberty Tree* (1841), 172.

*Celestial Rail-Road* (1843), 59, 126-7.

*Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846), 58, 154-5.

## INDEX OF AUTHORS AND BOOKS

---

Hawthorne, Nathaniel

*Scarlet Letter* (1850), 14,  
45-9, 105, 198.

*House of Seven Gables*  
(1851), 17-8.

*True Stories* (1851), 6.

*Snow Image*, English edi-  
tion (1851), 187; American  
edition (1852), 187.

*Blithedale Romance* (1852),  
209.

*Franklin Pierce* (1852), 104.

*Wonder-Book* (1852), 149.

*Tanglewood Tales* (1853), 16,  
149.

*Marble Faun* (1860), 185-6.

*Transformation* (1860), 185-6.

*American Note-Books* (1868),  
147.

*Our Old Home* (1863), 19.

*Pansie* (1864), 186.

*French and Italian Note-  
Books*, English edition  
(1871), 187; American  
edition (1872), 187

Holmes, Oliver Wendell

*Illustrations of Athenæum  
Gallery* (1830), 181-2.

*Harbinger* (1833), 182.

*Poems* (1836), 88, 102-3, 183;  
English edition (1846), 181,  
190-2; enlarged edition  
(1849), 147.

*Contagiousness of Puerperal  
Fever* (1843), 194.

*Astræa* (1850), 58, 139.

*Songs of Class of  
MDCCCXXIX* (1854),  
208.

*Puerperal Fever* (1855), 194.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell

*Autocrat of Breakfast-Table*  
(1858), 9, 9-10, 19, 29, 157,  
163-6, 174, 178-9; large  
paper (1859), 29, 149.

*Professor at Breakfast-Table*  
(1860), 102-3, 111-2, 157.

*Currents and Counter-Cur-  
rents* (1860), 171.

*Elsie Venner* (1861), 11.

*Songs in Many Keys* (1862),  
17.

*Soundings from Atlantic*  
(1864), 15.

*Guardian Angel* (1867), 209-  
10.

*To Christian Gottfried Ehren-  
berg* (1868), 172.

*Mechanism in Thought and  
Morals* (1871), 171.

*Poet at Breakfast-Table*  
(1872), 6, 156-7.

*Songs of Many Seasons*  
(1875), 210.

*Bunker Hill Memorial*  
(1875), 67-8.

*Harvard Sonnets* (1878), 172.

*John Lothrop Motley* (1879),  
75, 134-5.

*Medical Essays* (1883), 137.

*Over the Teacups*, English  
edition (1890), 187; Amer-  
ican edition (1891), 6, 20-  
1, 60, 187.

*James Russell Lowell* (1891),  
172.

*One Hoss Shay* (1892), 192.

*Dorothy Q.* (1893), 192.

Howe, Julia Ward

*Later Lyrics* (1866), 179.

## INDEX OF AUTHORS AND BOOKS

- Howells, William Dean  
*Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885),  
 12, 204.
- Irving, Washington  
*Salmagundi* (1807-8), 153,  
 194.  
*History of New York* (1809),  
 207.  
*Goeffrey Crayon* (1819-20),  
 153-4.  
*Tales of a Traveller* (1824),  
 153.  
*Christopher Columbus* (1828),  
 34.  
*Conquest of Granada* (1829),  
 112.  
*Alhambra* (1832), 112.  
*Crayon Miscellany* (1835),  
 34.  
*Astoria* (1836), 63.  
*Wolfert's Roost* (1855), 210.  
*Life of Washington* (1855-9),  
 210.
- Leland, Charles Godfrey  
*Hans Breitmann's Party*  
 (1868), 204.
- Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth  
*French Grammar*, second edi-  
 tion (1831), 26, 195.  
*Ministre de Wakefield*  
 (1831), 26-7.  
*Don Jorge Manrique* (1833),  
 136.  
*Outre-Mer* (1833-4), 155;  
 complete edition (1835),  
 196; revised complete edi-  
 tion (1846), 140.
- Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth  
*Voices of the Night* (1839),  
 135-6, 182.  
*Hyperion* (1839), 103.  
*Ballads* (1842), 58, 100-1,  
 182-3.  
*Poems on Slavery* (1842),  
 49-50, 58-9.  
*Spanish Student* (1843), 58.  
*Waif* (1845), 158.  
*Belfry of Bruges* (1846),  
 157.  
*Evangeline* (1847), 11, 35,  
 41-3, 58, 150.  
*Estray* (1847), 158.  
*Kavanagh* (1849), 17, 51,  
 91-4, 140.  
*Seaside and Fireside* (1850),  
 69, 115, 140-1.  
*Golden Legend* (1851), 130,  
 183.  
*Hiawatha* (1855), 80-3, 87,  
 183; English edition  
 (1855), 87-8.  
*Miles Standish* (1858), 17,  
 80-1, 82-3; second edition,  
 17, 82-3; English edition  
 (1858), 189-90.  
*Wayside Inn* (1863), 15-6.  
*Noël* (1864), 208.  
*New England Tragedies*  
 (1868), 130, 172, 175.  
*Divine Tragedy* (1871), 111,  
 130, 175.  
*Three Books of Song* (1872),  
 175.  
*Christus* (1872), 130-1, 137.  
*Aftermath* (1873), 60, 90, 175.  
*Hanging of the Crane*  
 (1875), 131-3, 145-6, 176.

## INDEX OF AUTHORS AND BOOKS

---

- Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth  
*Masque of Pandora* (1875), 107-10, 133.  
*Kéramos*, privately printed issue (1877), 172; published edition (1878), 174.  
*Early Poems* (1878), 186.  
*Bayard Taylor* (1879), 172.  
*Ultima Thule* (1880), 210.  
*In the Harbor* (1882), 210.  
*Michael Angelo* (1884), 137.
- Lowell, James Russell  
*Year's Life* (1841), 6, 64.  
*Poems* (1844), 111.  
*Conversations on Some Old Poets* (1845), 157-8.  
*Poems: Second Series* (1848), 89, 139-40, 147.  
*Fable for Critics* (1848), 96-100.  
*Sir Launfal* (1848), 58.  
*Biglow Papers* (1848), 102-3, 193.  
*Pesceballo* (1862), 59, 83-4.  
*Mason and Slidell* (1862), 209.  
*Biglow Papers. Second Series* (English edition, 1862), 188; (enlarged English edition, 1864), 188; (further enlarged English edition, 1865), 188; American and complete edition (1867), 145, 175, 188.  
*Commemoration Ode* (1865), 208.  
*Under the Willows* (1869), 6, 69, 175.  
*Among My Books* (1870), 210.
- Lowell, James Russell  
*My Study Windows* (1871), 149.  
*Three Books of Song* (1872), 175.  
*Among My Books. Second Series* (1876), 80, 127-8.  
*Three Memorial Poems* (1877), 90, 176.  
*On Democracy* (1884), 186.  
*Heartsease and Rue* (1888), 155-6.  
*Last Poems* (1895), 174.
- Marvel, Ik  
*Reveries of a Bachelor* (1850), 204.
- Melville, Herman  
*Typee* (1846), 58, 129, 194.  
*Omoo* (1847), 105, 129, 142-3.  
*Mardi* (1849), 105, 129-30.  
*Redburn* (1849), 210.  
*White-Jacket* (1850), 105.  
*Moby-Dick* (1851), 62, 104-5, 164, 174, 183-4.  
*Whale* (1851), 183-4.  
*Pierre* (1852), 105.  
*Israel Potter* (1855), 9.  
*Piazza Tales* (1856), 210.  
*Confidence Man* (1857), 105.  
*Clarel* (1876), 208.  
*John Marr* (1888), 208.  
*Timoleon* (1891), 208.
- Poe, Edgar Allan  
*Tamerlane* (1827), 169.  
*Al Aaraaf* (1829), 119.  
*Poems* (1831), 119.

## INDEX OF AUTHORS AND BOOKS

---

Poe, Edgar Allan

*Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838),  
184-5; English edition  
(1838), 184-5.

*Concologist's First Book*  
(1839), 31-2.

*Tales of the Grotesque*  
(1840), 208.

*Murders in Rue Morgue*  
(1843), 169.

*Raven* (1845), 184, 197-8;  
English edition (1845),  
184-5.

*Tales* (1845), 184; English  
edition (1845), 184-5,  
second English edition  
(1846), 186.

*Mesmerism* (1846), 186.

*Eureka* (1848), 106-7.

Stockton, Frank Richard

*Rudder Grange* (1879), 204.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852),  
105, 126, 149, 204.

Thoreau, Henry David

*Week on Concord and Mer-  
rimack* (1849), 77, 86-7;  
second edition (1862), 77-8,  
86-7, 195.

*Walden* (1854), 18-9, 26, 63.

*Excursions* (1863), 62-3.

*Maine Woods* (1864), 13-4,  
90.

*Cape Cod* (1865), 145.

*Yankee in Canada* (1866),  
210.

Twain, Mark

*Celebrated Jumping Frog*  
(1867), 14.

*Innocents Abroad* (1869), 6.

*Tom Sawyer* (1876), 205-6.

*Prince and Pauper*, English  
edition (1881), 187; Ameri-  
can edition (1882), 187.

*1601* (1882), 208.

*Life on Mississippi* (1883),  
6-7.

*Huckleberry Finn*, English  
edition (1884), 187; Ameri-  
can edition (1885), 152,  
187, 205-6.

*Connecticut Yankee in King  
Arthur's Court* (1889), 210.

*Personal Recollections of  
Joan of Arc* (1896), 210.

Wallace, Lew

*Ben-Hur* (1880), 38-9, 52,  
204.

Whitman, Walt

*Franklin Evans* (1842),  
158-9.

*Leaves of Grass* (1855), 20,  
32, 43-4, 89, 159, 166, 172-  
3, 196, 203; second edition  
(1856), 32, 196-7; third  
edition (1860-1), 21-2, 143;  
spurious third edition  
(1879, etc.), 21-2.

*Drum-Taps* (1865), 44-5.

*Memoranda during the War*  
(1875-6), 208.

*Two Rivulets* (1876), 171.

*Specimen Days* (1882-3), 210.

*November Boughs* (1888),  
210.



## INDEX OF AUTHORS AND BOOKS

---

Whittier, John Greenleaf

*Legends of New-England*  
(1831), 71-4, 100.

*Moll Pitcher* (1832), 110-1.

*History of Haverhill* (1832),  
30.

*Justice and Expediency*  
(1833), 194-5.

*Song of Vermonters* (1833),  
207.

*Mogg Megone* (1836), 60,  
110-1, 143.

*Poems Written During Prog-  
ress of Abolition Question*  
(1837), 27-9, 31, 39-41,  
118.

*Our Countrymen in Chains*  
(1837), 172.

*Letters from John Quincy  
Adams* (1837), 28.

*Poems* (1838), 106, 118.

*James Williams* (1838),  
112-4.

*Minstrel Girl* (1840), 111.

*Lays of My Home* (1843),  
58, 118.

*Ballads and Other Poems*  
(1844), 118-9.

*Stranger in Lowell* (1845),  
156.

*Voices of Freedom* (1846),  
116-20, 158.

*Supernaturalism of New  
England* (1847), 156.

Whittier, John Greenleaf

*Margaret Smith's Journal*  
(1849), 89-90, 114-6.

*Songs of Labor* (1850), 17.

*Old Portraits* (1850), 90.

*Tract for the Times!* (1850),  
172.

*Chapel of the Hermits*  
(1853), 210.

*Literary Recreations* (1854),  
210.

*Maud Muller* (1854), 172.

*Panorama* (1856), 183.

*Sycamores* (1857), 209.

*In War Time* (1864), 11-2,  
15, 128-9, 143-4, 183.

*Snow-Bound* (1866), 37-8.

*Tent on the Beach* (1867),  
91-2, 95-6.

*Among the Hills* (1869),  
136-7, 149, 175.

*Miriam* (1871), 146-7, 175.

*Pennsylvania Pilgrim* (1872),  
175.

*Hazel-Blossoms* (1875), 145-  
6, 175.

*Mabel Martin* (1876), 148.

*Vision of Echard* (1878),  
174-5.

*King's Missive* (1881), 176.

*Bay of Seven Islands* (1883),  
19-20, 136-7.

*Jack in the Pulpit* (1884),  
187.













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